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Memoir of the Rev. Levi Parsons

MEMOIR

OF THE

REV. LEVI PARSONS,

FIRST MISSIONARY TO PALESTINE

FROM THE

UNITED STATES.

ORIGINALLY COMPILED BY THE

Rev. DAN. O. MORTON, A.M.

NOW EDITED AND ABRIDGED

BY WILLIAM INNES,

MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL.

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PREFACE.

THE volume from which this is reprinted is entitled "Memoir of LEVI PARSONS, first Missionary to Palestine from the United States, containing Sketches of his early Life and Education,—his Missionary Labours in America,—in Asia Minor and Judea,—with an Account of his last Sickness and Death. Second edition. Compiled and prepared by the Rev. DAN. O. MORTON, A.M." The compiler, as is seen from the Memoir, was Mr. PARSONS' brother-in-law, and thus had full access to know the particulars of his early history.

Mr. PARSONS' companion in this Mission was the Rev. PLINY FISK, and when this second edition was printed in 1830, the Compiler observes, "The lamented FISK,

no longer a dweller in this vale of tears, has, we doubt not, found his beloved companion in the Jerusalem which is above. Perhaps both were taken away from the evil to come. But whatever may be the future destiny of the American Mission to Western Asia, whether wars and rumours of wars, and persecutions may or may not be permitted for a time to suspend its operations, much good has already been effected. To some extent the light of heaven has expelled the darkness of a thousand years, and some first fruits to God and the Lamb have already appeared."

Some time ago a Memoir of PLINY FISK was reprinted in this city, and has been read with much interest. Through the kindness of a friend I have been furnished with a copy from America of the Memoir of his most estimable companion, and this I think will be found a no less acceptable offering to British Christians.

It has been a frequent complaint that some of the specimens we have had of Ame-

rican biography, however excellent in many respects, have been too long. This may be partly accounted for from the consideration, that many things which, from local circumstances and attachments, would be exceedingly interesting to the American reader, are not so to others. This remark, in a good measure, applies to the life of PARSONS. Various episodes (as they may be termed,) are introduced into his Memoir by his biographer. For example, when he mentions the death of a college friend, he gives a considerable part of his history. On this account I have somewhat abridged the American Memoir, omitting incidents of little moment, and also some local circumstances and details which could only be interesting to those with whom the individuals referred to were more immediately connected. While this edition, then, is somewhat reduced in size, I consider it in this way improved, as it is rendered more accessible by being diminished in price, while nothing of real interest is omitted.

Some readers may perhaps think I might have shortened it still more, and especially have omitted some of those letters (one in particular to his excellent mother,) in which he spoke of that great depression of mind he often experienced. When we recollect how very imperfectly we know the connection between mind and body, and how often the feelings of the former are affected by the state of the latter, it must be allowed that the subject of mental depression, when associated with distinguished piety, is one of some difficulty. But without entering on the discussion of it here, I thought it most satisfactory to give a fair representation of the state of Mr. PARSONS' mind as developed in his familiar correspondence with those to whom he could unbosom himself. Every one who wishes to study the character of eminent Christians, and to learn from it all that can be learned, would wish to see them just as they are. We have here a *mental fact*, which it is desirable to know, whatever conclusions may be drawn from it.

Mr. PARSONS, as we have seen, bore the distinguished and honourable character of a Missionary of the Cross, and no one was ever more eminently endowed with the spirit becoming such an employment. While this volume, then, contains many admirable suggestions and stimulating considerations to Missionaries of every description,* it

* I cannot advert to the value of this volume to Missionaries, without directing the attention of the reader to another, a copy of which ought to be found in every institution connected with the spread of the Gospel, and given to every Missionary when going to a foreign land. I refer to a volume of letters by the Rev. WILLIAM SWAN, entitled "Letters on Missions," stating the difficulties of the Missionary enterprise, and containing many admirable hints, both to those employed at home in conducting Missions, and those more immediately engaged in the service. On this subject the writer has a peculiar claim to be heard, having been himself engaged for twelve years as a Missionary to Selinginsk, in Siberia, where he has been the honoured instrument of translating the New Testament into the Mongolian language, and has recently returned to this country to get it printed. He has the prospect of speedily returning to commu-

cannot fail to be read also with peculiar advantage by all engaged in the Ministry of the Gospel, or who have the prospect of devoting their lives to this honourable service. Nor, I may add, will it be found less fitted to edify every private Christian from the peculiar spirituality of character which Mr. PARSONS so powerfully exemplified.

In reading the Memoir of Mr. PARSONS, we are carried back to the days of EDWARDS, BRAINERD, and HENRY MARTYN, and are reminded of that high toned piety by which these eminent servants of God were distinguished; and while every reader must be struck with the contrast between the singular devotedness of such men, and that dwarfish Christianity with which professors in general in the present day rest satisfied, it is useful and edifying to place such models before our view. While

nicate to the Mongolian Tartars that precious boon which he carries along with him. Who does not most cordially wish him God speed.

such a contrast is fitted to fill us with deep humility, we shall not improve these examples as we ought if they do not stimulate us to increased zeal and activity, while they show what, even in this state of imperfection, men of like passions with ourselves have attained.

WILLIAM INNES.

EDINBURGH,
April 24, 1832.

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MEMOIR.

PART I.

SKETCHES OF MR. PARSONS'S YOUTH AND EDUCATION.

Levi Parsons, the second son of Rev. Justin, and Mrs. Electa Parsons, was born in Goshen, Massachusetts, July 18, 1792. His childhood was not distinguished by any remarkable events. That loveliness of disposition, however, so conspicuous in manhood, spread a charm over his early years. He was very careful not to offend or displease his parents. And they remember, with melancholy joy, that they never had occasion to correct him, nor even to administer a sharp rebuke. He needed only to know their will, and it was obeyed. The same pleasantness of disposition was also manifested toward his brothers and sisters. He never had any contention with them. It might be expected that a child so obedient and pleasant at home, would be easily managed at school; and it is not known that he was ever censured by an instructor.

He was greatly attached to the domestic circle; and when sent abroad to school, a few miles only, he could seldom depart without weeping. This was not the effect of childish weakness; but it resulted from the strength and tenderness of his affections. That he had resolution and decision when a child, was fully mani-

fested to his school-fellows. In moments of leisure, he would unite with them in healthful sport, and would retire whenever he thought proper. It was in vain to call him back, for he would never return.

Perhaps some facts, but recently communicated, and then only in confidence to a Christian friend, ought not to be suppressed. Levi was particularly a subject of prayer before his birth, and when in the cradle he was selected from the rest of the sons to be a preacher. Thus early was he lent to the Lord to minister before him all the days of his life. The thoughts of the pious reader will instantly recur to the early dedication of Samuel, the prophet. And perhaps a story not dissimilar might have been told respecting thousands, who have been luminaries in the church of no ordinary splendour. With the view just mentioned, Levi while quite young was sent abroad to school. He had seasons of seriousness from early childhood; but as his concern for his soul did not, for a considerable time, issue in hopeful conversion, it became a serious question with the parents, whether they ought to give him a classical education. For though secretly dedicated to the work of the gospel ministry, they had no desire that he should engage in it with an unsanctified heart. They determined, however, to proceed, in the hope that at no very distant period, he might experience a spiritual renovation. How much depended on that decision is in part already known.

During a season of "refreshing from the presence of the Lord" in the winter and spring of 1808, Levi was hopefully renewed by the Divine Spirit; and in June following, he publicly professed his attachment to the Redeemer, and united with the church of Christ in Goshen.

From this period little is known to the writer respecting him, till he became a member of Middlebury College in August, 1810. Previously to this, in the course of the same year, his father had been ordained

pastor of the congregational church in Whiting, Vt. and had removed thither with his family.

My acquaintance with Mr. Parsons began with the commencement of his college life. Though two years earlier in college, I often met him in the same conference room and prayer meeting. It is well known that the necessary distinction of classes in college is, in some measure, done away by a union, which makes believers "all one in Christ Jesus." The writer well recollects the pleasure, which he experienced, when young Parsons was admitted a member of the Philadelphian Society, an association of pious students. Though then almost an entire stranger, his modesty and evident humility greatly endeared him to the writer; and it is believed the same effect was produced in other minds.

Not unfrequently does Jehovah prepare those whom he has selected for extensive usefulness, by sore outward afflictions, or distressing inward conflicts. The latter was the fact with Mr. Parsons. During a revival of religion, in that favoured institution of which he was a member, in the autumn of 1811, he began very seriously to question the genuineness of his piety; and for a number of weeks almost despaired of mercy. When delivered from this cheerless bondage, his joys were very great. As his exercises at this time, especially after he had a spiritual discovery of the divine glory, and the way of life through a crucified Saviour, evidently gave a cast to his whole future life and character; it will probably be interesting to learn from his own pen the state of his mind.

The paper containing this account is dated

"*Middlebury College, November* 22, 1811.

"The revival of religion in this College commenced about the beginning of last September. For several months previously to this blessed work, my mind was in darkness, and at times in much distress. I was often convinced that my hope was only the

hope of the hypocrite, and that notwithstanding the public profession I had made of my faith in the Redeemer, I should at last come short of eternal life. My reasons for this conclusion were the following: my hope did not afford consolation—prayer was not refreshing and spiritual—religious conversation was no more interesting than conversation upon the things of the world. If I am a child of God, why is it thus with me? During all this time I believe the Spirit of God was striving with me, and preparing me for a more thorough knowledge of my own heart. When the revival commenced, I said, now this question must be decided. I cannot live in this state of anxious uncertainty. I must have more evidence of piety, or live without hope. At the next conference, I mentioned to my brethren the darkness and distress of my mind, with the hope that they would pray for me without ceasing. This was the effect. My Christian friends conversed with me, and prayed and wept for me in secret places. For this tenderness and faithfulness, they have my sincere thanks, and my prayers to God that he would reward them an hundred fold.

"During the two succeeding weeks, I walked in thick darkness; surely it was the darkness of the shadow of death. I read the promises to the penitent, but could not apply them to myself. There was nothing in the Bible to heal my wounded spirit. How readily would I have given the world, were it in my possession, for that peace, which God giveth to his children. At a meeting on Saturday evening, I rose to speak, but could not proceed. 'O pray for me,' was all I could say. After meeting, my friends said, 'you must resign yourself to God;' but in my view I could no more do it, than I could move the globe. Every effort was struggling against God; every prayer was the service of the lips, not of the heart. I went backward and forward, on the right hand and on the left, but could not find him. I re-

tired for rest, but 'my thoughts on awful subjects roll'd, damnation and the dead.' I slept a few moments, but it was the sleep of sorrow. I awoke to experience the bitterness of despair. The next Sabbath, as the Rev. Mr. M. was absent, a sermon was read from 2 Corinthians, v. 20, in which the importance of the present moment was urged with great faithfulness. Again I tried to bow to the Saviour. Reclining upon the seat, I cried audibly, so that a few heard me, 'what shall I do?' About this time six of my fellow students were rejoicing in hope of the glory of God. This event taught me the exceeding depravity of my heart. It led me to reflect that 'it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God, that showeth mercy.' I could not be willing that such a God should reign. The Scriptures commanded me to repent, and yet affirmed, 'it is God that showeth mercy.' In this situation I continued until the next Sabbath morning, which I shall ever remember as the happiest of my life. After prayers in the chapel, I took my Bible, and retired to a grove west of the college. I recollect distinctly the impression on my mind while I walked to the grove, that it was the last attempt; if unsuccessful now, I can do no more. This passage of Scripture was fixed in my mind, 'O Israel thou hast destroyed thyself.' My past abused privileges, my unholy prayers, my opposition to a holy God were set in array before me; and I saw the wickedness of my whole life, as clearly as I saw the sun which shone upon me. I believe I had no doubt, that I was a vessel of wrath fitted for destruction. Wearied and distressed I sat down upon a log, and contemplated the miseries of hell. My thoughts were thus: 'your doom is now certain; you did hope for heaven, but you will hope no more. Your sentence is just. O miserable hell! God commands you to repent; but your heart is too hard, it will not relent.' At this moment, I was directed to Jesus, as an all-sufficient

Saviour. Then my heart acquiesced in his atonement, and in his dealings with such a vile sinner, as I saw myself to be; and my soul reposed itself on the arm of everlasting love. I felt the chain break. O it was the bondage of sin! I opened the Bible, and read these words, 'For this cause, I bow my knees to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.' It will never be in my power to give an adequate description of my feelings in view of this passage. There was a beauty, majesty, and sweetness in it, which are indescribable. I dwelt upon it until my heart was in a flame of love. Jesus revealed himself in his glory. In his countenance shone a divine majesty and benevolence. In a moment I raised my hands, and exclaimed, 'Father, glorify thyself.' (These words were often repeated.) Thy law is holy, and just, and good. Let the Lord reign, and let all the people keep silence before him. If I perish, I can smile to see the Lord Jesus King over all the earth. After an hour, I returned to my room. Brother Hall was singing these words, 'My heart grows warm with holy fire.' It was sweet, heavenly music; it rejoiced my heart. During the day I was not sensible of any peculiar change; but in the evening, after giving a statement of the dealings of God with me, heaven opened to my ravished eye, and the divine Redeemer took up his abode in my heart. This was a hope full of glory—this was peace of conscience and joy in the Holy Spirit. Passed the night with uncle S. P. and it was a night of heavenly peace. The world lost its charms; death appeared only the gate to glory. For the first time, I desired to depart and be with Christ. The next day I was rather insensible until evening;—at the close of secret prayer, my soul thirsted, even panted after God. For two hours, I could say, 'none but Christ—none but Christ.' It was better to sit at the feet of Jesus, and to hear his gracious words, than to receive the honours and riches of the whole world. To him I

dedicated my life, my talents, my all; desiring to be devoted to him, while I remain in the flesh, and to be accepted of him, when I pass the valley of the shadow of death. To God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, be blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, for ever.—Amen."

Some time after the events here related, Mr. Parsons forwarded this account to his mother, in compliance with her particular request. The original paper, which he penned for his own use, and from which it was transcribed, is before me; and I find by comparison that the account now given is somewhat abridged.

If, in the Christian experience of some of God's favoured children, there be some things which excite our astonishment, let us not rashly condemn that to which we may not have attained. Thousands are undoubtedly brought into the Redeemer's kingdom, with far less terror than Mr. Parsons experienced, and without such raptures of joy. His religion, however, was of a modest character; and he was decidedly opposed to any thing which savoured of ostentation.

During the period under consideration, Mr. Parsons supposed that he had ever before been a stranger to vital godliness. But on farther examination of his heart, and more mature reflection, he was on the whole rather inclined to think otherwise. Whether he was, or was not, a true believer before, this was eminently a new era in his Christian life, and he now received an impulse in religion, which he never lost. The remark, though not new, is doubtless just, that the mind sometimes receives a bias in conversion, or in the period of first love, which gives a particular direction to the whole course of future life. This was the fact in the present instance. For in this delightful period of his espousals to Christ, the wants and wretchedness of the heathen very deeply

impressed the mind of Mr. Parsons, and some of his first desires were for their illumination and conversion.

His hope was that which maketh not ashamed; his faith was not a cold assent to doctrines, nor merely a belief that his sins had been forgiven. Even at the early period of eighteen, he manifested something of that love to souls—that Christian zeal and expansive benevolence, which shone afterwards with brighter splendour. In the winter vacation of 1812, he spent several days in visiting, in his father's society, from house to house, for the sole purpose of recommending that Saviour, whom his soul loved. Whether any salutary effects resulted from this labour of love, another day will reveal.

I here introduce a few extracts from Mr. Parsons' journal. It is in this paper, under date "April 5, 1812," I find the first distinct mention of a mission to the heathen. He says,

"I frequently think of spending my life as a missionary to the heathen. This consideration sometimes fires me with uncommon zeal. I hope God will cause me to know his will, make me willing to go wherever he pleases, prepare me to fight his battles, and afterwards receive me to his kingdom. I intend to think of heaven this week in my leisure hours."

This last observation is worthy of particular remark. Different indeed would be the condition of Christians, did they always, or often "think of heaven," and meditate on its glories, "in their leisure hours."

"*Sabbath morning*, *June* 21.—The natural sun shines with unusual splendour, and the Sun of Righteousness beams upon my soul. I hope to spend this day entirely in the divine service. Yesterday noon, brother Fisk and myself walked abroad to warn sinners, and to comfort the saints. In the college conference last evening, I was constrained to confess my vileness. After meeting, light dawned on my soul; Jesus ap-

peared lovely, and never was I sensible of such love to the children of God. If it is so pleasant to behold a few rays of Christ's glory shining in his saints, how glorious, how unspeakably blessed will be the paradise of God! This Saviour whom my soul loveth, and melteth at the sound of his voice, will be seen in all the majesty of God. O my Saviour, how have I grieved thee! But on thy kind arms I fall, and rest on thy bosom. I hope to be kept by thy love, and at last see thee face to face. O blessed morning! O my Saviour, come quickly.

"*Sabbath morning*, *August* 16.—My heart is awfully corrupt, a sink of iniquity. I can join with President Edwards, and say that my iniquities are 'infinite upon infinite.' Once more will I venture near thy throne, O my God. If thou dost ever smile upon me, it will be through infinite, free, and sovereign grace. 'Let me fall into the hand of the Lord, but not into the hand of man.'

"*September* 20, 1812.—During the late vacation, my mind has been barren and frozen in stupidity. I found little enjoyment in prayer, and at times it was a burden. How can infinite purity endure such services! I have often been struck with astonishment, at the close of secret prayer, at the coldness of my mind. Frequently I begin by ascribing to God the attributes of omniscience, omnipotence, eternity, and immutability; imploring his protection, the pardon of my sins, the light of his countenance; beseeching him to extend the Redeemer's kingdom, and glorify himself. During all this time, I have no suitable sense of his Being, nor one spiritual desire for the extension of Christ's kingdom. Be astonished, O heaven! How just that I should have leanness sent into my soul. If I ever arrive at heaven, my devotions will be pure, and my soul stedfast in the service of God, and

'Jesus and salvation be
The close of every song.'

Hail happy day! Recently I have had considerable enjoyment. God gives me temporal prosperity, and now and then a glimpse of heaven. If a distant sight of God affords joy unspeakable, what pleasure will fill my soul, when heaven opens to my view.

"*Lord's day, October* 25, 1812.—This evening received the news of the death of brother Harrington Hall, of Sudbury. He had been a member of this college more than two years, and one year my room-mate; but now he has bid me a final adieu. He was cut down suddenly, and called to appear before his judge. My room-mate confined to the land of silence, and I yet live! I anticipated his recovery, and flattered myself that I should still enjoy his company; but his days are numbered and finished. After he had performed the work assigned him, 'the silver cord was loosed, the golden bowl broken.' O my brother, art thou in eternity, is thy probationary state closed, thy lips sealed in silence, and thy body left a feast for worms? Is thine eternal destiny pronounced? Hast thou seen God, and angels, and heaven? Hast thou commenced an eternal song? O my brother, my brother, farewell! By this event may I learn how wicked, how foolish, to place my affections on things below! May I be wise for time and eternity, and so profit by this and similar events, that I may live the life of the righteous, 'that my last end may be like his.'

"*November 7th, Saturday evening.*—I have one thing particularly to lament, that a certain time, while attempting to pray, I had a greater desire to please men than God. This brought darkness on my soul. I hope for pardon and deep repentance. This evening had an unusually solemn and interesting meeting. I delight to be where God is worshipped. Let the Lord live, and reign for ever and ever.

"My strength is weakness, my heart obdurate; I need the scourging hand of God to keep me humble, to remind me of my dependence."

About the 1st of January, 1813, Mr. Parsons removed his relation from the church of Christ in Goshen, Mass. and united with the church of Christ in Middlebury, under the pastoral care of Rev. Mr. Merrill. During the winter vacation of this year, Mr. Parsons spent some time in the western part of Massachusetts. A reference to his journey and visit I find in his journal, dated

"*Middlebury College, March* 28.—It truly becomes me to make mention of the guardian love of my Creator, and to live devoted to him. While death has raged in an unusual manner, my life, and the lives of my friends, are preserved."

[The winter of 1813 was rendered memorable in several sections of Vermont, by the unusual prevalence of disease and mortality.]

It appears by Mr Parsons's journal, that before he commenced his journey to Massachusetts, he resolved to introduce religious conversation in all places and companies, where it should appear suitable. This resolution "I was enabled," he says, "partly to perform." The result is unknown, but surely the example is worthy of imitation. If journeys and visits were commenced with an unfeigned desire to glorify God, and to promote the salvation of men, different, indeed, would be the aspect of society. A word for Jehovah at the inn, a word by the way, might be seed sown, which would bear fruit to eternal life. The day will come when visits and journeys will be "holiness to the Lord;" and if Christians would improve these opportunities of usefulness, as some individuals have improved them, the amount of good would be incalculable.

In May, Mr. Parsons was again brought into the school of affliction. The state of his mind may be ascertained from his journal.

"*May* 15, 1813, *Sabbath morn.*—Afflictions sanctified are the richest blessings. They are designed to quicken the Christian in his spiritual work, to lead

the mind to the source of all consolation, to Jesus Christ, who was a 'man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief.' When some earthly object is gaining an ascendancy in the mind; when the love of honour, of pleasure, of wealth, diminishes the attachment for heavenly meditations, then the path is beset with thorns, light is turned into darkness, sweetness into wormwood and gall, till the cry ascends to heaven, 'I will arise, and go to my Father, and say unto him, Father I have sinned.' These, I would hope, will be the effects produced by the recent afflictive Providence. My dear and much beloved cousin, Erastus Parsons, closed his mortal existence the last week. He was my friend, my counsellor, my Christian brother. Pleasant in his manners, instructive in his conversation, and devotional in religious duties, he was qualified for extensive usefulness in the gospel ministry. But his bright prospects were soon blasted, or rather *perfected*, by an early departure from the world. How affectionately did he bid me adieu, pointing to heaven for an eternal meeting. His last counsel I can never forget, 'live near to God in secret, crucify the world, be faithful to sinners.' Then unable to say more, he breathed out a long *Farewell!* This affliction, unless I am greatly deceived, has given me additional evidence of a good hope, through grace. With humble confidence I can say, I loved God for his *holiness*, *Christians* as the image of Christ, the Holy Scriptures because they are pure. I think I can say, 'I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.' If a deceived heart hath turned me aside, I pray God to take the veil from my heart, and guide me in the way everlasting. Convinced of my weakness, I desire to look to him, who is able to save to the uttermost. Thanks to God that those who wait upon him shall renew their strength. The humble believer, amidst his greatest dangers and temptations, may look to him as an eternal Refuge, an unfading Portion."

"*July* 18, 1813.—This Sabbath morning is the commencement of an interesting period of my life; twenty years are past. My obligations to love and respect my parents were never greater, and never more gratefully reviewed. How often they prayed for me, and wept over me, when I was too young to know the value of their instructions, or to express the gratitude which they merited. With what faithfulness did they instruct me in the knowledge of my own heart, and in the great plan of salvation through the sufferings and death of Jesus Christ. And when I was led captive at the will of Satan, and heedlessly pursued the road to ruin, they continued to warn and reprove with many tears. To the latest period of my life, it shall be my care to administer to their happiness.

"But to him who gave me life, is due my supreme affections, my unceasing gratitude. To him, who *died* to redeem me, be glory and thanksgiving for ever. I desire to be instrumental of advancing his cause. Pains, sufferings, afflictions are not to be mentioned here. To die at the stake; what is it? when the honour of Jesus, and the advancement of his kingdom require it. O for grace to fulfil his will, to be faithful even unto death. Then, animating reflection, may I hope to reign with all the redeemed, and 'be near and like my God.'

"*September* 12, 1813.—I have now commenced my last year in college. It is my desire to spend it for God, to be 'diligent in business,' yet 'fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.' Intense study will check the progress of piety, and lead the soul away from prayer, unless there be constant watchfulness and faithfulness. Let me not forget that the glory of God is to be the ruling motive of my conduct; that no study, however interesting or enchanting, is of any consequence any farther than that it can be made to subserve the interests of the church. Perhaps the Spirit of the Lord will be poured out from on high,

and sinners brought to repentance. As the most feeble attempts are sometimes sanctified, I desire not to be weary in well doing; for in due time I shall reap if I faint not."

About this time, the people in Lewis, in the county of Essex, N. Y. applied to Mr. Parsons to instruct a school, and aid an infant church in the devotions of the Sabbath. He accordingly went and spent some time in that place. During his residence there, the church was very small, and though there was no special revival of religion, yet his labours were highly useful. Many were induced to attend public worship, and a general religious bias was given to the state of society, which yet remains, and has been followed with the happiest consequences. A gentleman of respectability told the writer, that no person ever resided in that place, who was more beloved, or in an equal period of time more useful.

His departure from the beloved society in Lewis, was painful. In a letter to his eldest sister, he says,

"It was with extreme regret that I parted with the church and people, especially my dear pupils. To hear them sighing the last farewell, to see them watching my departing steps, with audible groans and streaming eyes, was a scene truly affecting."

In the journal of Mr. Parsons, I find the following motive of his return to college, which evinces a high religious state of enjoyment.

"*March* 17, 1814.—Returned from Lewis, after a pleasant and prosperous season. Israel's God has been my Hope and Director. In my school and society he went before me, and made my way agreeable. To him be all the glory. Praise him, O my soul. Not unfrequently has the Lord remarkably interposed for my deliverance. His angels have had charge concerning me, lest I should fall. Amidst

my fatigue and trials, health, together with some glimmerings of mental light, have been my high privilege. God can make the wilderness pleasant, and the desert a hidden place for his children. In his name let me trust, and dangers vanish. Returned to Bridport, witnessed the wonderful operations of the Divine Spirit; twenty-nine received to communion, Christians enlivened, sinners alarmed, and God glorified."

On one subject Mr. Parsons often reflected with deep solicitude. Fearful, however, of rushing with unhallowed step into an arduous service, and of raising expectations which might end in disappointment, it long remained a secret in his own bosom. The following letter will fully explain these remarks:—

"*Middlebury College, May* 2, 1814.

"Dear Parents,—I have long desired to introduce for your consideration, a subject, which for years has agitated my mind: a subject solemn in its nature, but joyful in its consequences. I mean *a foreign mission.* Through a distrust of my own abilities, together with the delicacy of the subject, I have hitherto concealed my feelings, even from my most intimate friends. And now nothing but the idea of unbosoming myself to my beloved parents, who with the utmost solicitude have long led me by the hand in the paths of wisdom, could induce me to write. Being fully persuaded of your watchfulness and anxiety, I should be guilty of the most criminal ingratitude by a longer delay. From that blessed moment, when, as I trust, I experienced the smiles of heaven, and the joys of pardoned sin, the deplorable condition of the heathen has sensibly affected my mind. I have desired, and sometimes resolved, by the leave of Providence, to proclaim in their ears a crucified Saviour. This spring the subject has appeared more solemn than ever, and often I am in the centre of Asia, listening to the groans of the eastern world, which are wafted

to heaven for deliverance. Indeed I converse more with the heathen than with my own class-mates. Since I received my last letter from Mr. Richards, I find that delay upon this subject can no longer be indulged. This great question must be decided, 'Shall I go to Asia?' Mr. Richards observes, that, after this question is decided, all my studies must be turned into this channel. My prayers, my conversation, and my exertions must all be intended to forward this purpose. Impressed with the solemnity and importance of the undertaking, and conscious of my own weakness and insufficiency, I would with a trembling heart ask the advice of my parents. Confiding in your wisdom, and understanding of this subject, I am confident that the decision will be honourable to the cause of the Redeemer, and satisfactory to myself. To leave my country and my friends is comparatively a small trial, since I have committed them to the divine protection. But when I consider the danger of proceeding without a call from heaven; the danger of denying the faith, and of sinking under the afflictions, which accompany such an undertaking, I have trials of an almost overwhelming magnitude. I have not those qualifications, those mental endowments, which are indispensable to a missionary. I am wanting in ardent piety, Christian zeal, and almost every thing beside. When sinking into dispondency, and despairing of relief, the sweet promises of Christ to his weak, yet faithful followers, give me substantial consolation. Taking all these things in consideration, what must I do? Must I no longer indulge the thought of becoming a missionary, or a minister? Then death (I speak with awe) would appear more desirable than life.

"Become a missionary—O blessed thought! May I indulge it! Labour, toil, suffer and die for souls—O the honour is too great! 'Tis an angel's trust;—here I pause and wonder.

"Weigh against one soul, the pleasures of civiliz-

ed life, the endearments of friends and relatives, the gold of Ophir, and the treasures of the east; how unequal the balance! The sacrifice of our little all should be disregarded, when the glory of God, and the joys of heaven are brought into view. I have already given myself away to God, I hope, without reserve. Nor do I wish to make any reserve as to my future life. Where his Spirit directs I feel bound to follow. Should infinite mercy grant me a crown of glory, how pleasing the consideration to have it sparkle with heathen souls. Nay, farther, how pleasing to labour, to toil and suffer for him, who, through infinite condescension and boundless grace, endured the pains of Calvary!

"But I forbear—Desiring that God may make you, my dear parents, rich in word and doctrine, and grant you the greatest favour conferred on mortals, a seat in his kingdom; I subscribe myself, with sentiments of respect and dutiful esteem."

"*May* 17, 1814.—Read this day the Memoirs of Mrs. Newell. Her love for the souls of the heathen enabled her to triumph even in prospect of death. She left her beloved country and friends, and received even in this life, by divine consolation, an hundred fold; and then entered joyfully upon the recompence of reward. This is the portion of those, 'whom the King delighteth to honour.'

"The subject of foreign missions has of late excited considerable solicitude in my mind. It has been a subject of prayer. I think I can say, if it be the will of God, I will go to Asia. I sincerely hope I shall be directed in the path of duty. Many towns in this vicinity are destitute of a preacher of the Gospel; and many souls perishing for the bread of life. Where duty will direct I know not. My own will I dare not consult. Divine Redeemer, send me where I can best promote thy glory. Not my will but thine be done.

"*May* 25, 1814.—The present is a solemn time in college. God, in infinite mercy, is reviving his work. Sinners are inquiring the way to Zion. 'Let every thing which hath breath praise the Lord.'

"*May* 30.—Prayer meeting in my room; delightful season; sinners tremble, saints rejoice. God is present of a truth. A few begin to hope. My mind is unusually solemn, and my hope strengthened. I have endeavoured to discharge my duty to my fellow students, and now I must leave them. The time of my departure from college is at hand. My impenitent fellow-students, once more I would invite you to the Saviour of sinners; once more I will say, 'Father, forgive them;' now farewell! With the Saviour for our guide, friend, and protector, we shall meet again; not with these clogs of sin and corruption, but with bodies made like to the Son of God. Peace attend you. Finish your course with joy; secure a title to the approbation of your Judge. *Farewell.*"

Having bid his impenitent fellow-students farewell, Mr. Parsons seems, in the remaining sentences, to have included the whole college, many of whom were hopefully pious.

The following letter to Rev. Moses Hallock, of Plainfield, Massachusetts, will show the state of his mind, during a season of unusual religious attention.

"*Middlebury College, June* 24, 1814.

"Rev. Sir,—The present is a solemn period. God is pleased, in his mysterious Providence, to visit this seminary again by the effusions of his Holy Spirit. The work commenced about four weeks since. Four young gentlemen of promising talents, who had been long regardless of God and their own salvation, are now proclaiming their Maker's praises. At present they appear to possess the spirit of Christ, and are much engaged for the salvation of their fellow-students. Thousands may be brought to glory through the instrumentality of these young disciples; perhaps

many perishing heathen. Bless the Lord, O my soul! let all the saints praise him. Last evening about an hundred students assembled in a conference meeting, and many were deeply affected. While the brethren spoke of the attributes of God, particularly his justice in the destruction of the incorrigible sinner, and his mercy in saving any, all was silent as the grave. One who had for some time neglected his duty as a Christian, and mingled with the world, arose with a burdened heart. His countenance strongly indicated the anguish of his mind. He spake of his past conduct with the deepest regret, and solemnly warned sinners not to let his life prove the ruin of their souls. Many wept; O yes, many who, a few days since, trifled with serious subjects, now weep for their immortal souls. The scene reminded us of the general judgment, when saints will rejoice in the smiles of their Saviour, and the sinner tremble at his final sentence. Some of those very individuals, who were most active in wickedness, now cry for mercy. God has smiled upon this institution in a peculiar manner. This is the fourth revival which I have witnessed here. In the senior class twenty-five are hopefully pious; in the freshmen all but four. 'Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us; but to thy name be all the glory.' What wonders are wrought 'in the name of the holy child Jesus!' There is the sound of much rain. O that the saints in Plainfield would pray for us at this critical moment. Who can tell but God designs to raise up many in this college to proclaim salvation to the heathen, and hasten on the latter glorious day?

"The revival among your dear people is peculiarly pleasing to Christians here. God is evidently demolishing the walls of Satan's kingdom, and building up his own. The church is coming up out of the wilderness, leaning on her beloved."

With the extent of this revival, the writer is un-

acquainted. Revivals, however, in seminaries of science are sometimes underrated. When the majority are professors of religion, a small number of hopeful conversions may be the effect of a comparatively great display of divine grace. A revival in a literary institution, which brings ten into the Redeemer's kingdom, may in reality be equal to one elsewhere, which numbers ten times as many subjects, and the consequences to the church and the world may be far more propitious.

Mr. Parsons was graduated in August, 1814. As a scholar his standing was highly respectable. At the exhibitions of his class, he was honoured with flattering appointments; and at the commencement in which he took leave of college, he pronounced to universal acceptance a eulogy on the celebrated Scotch Reformer, John Knox. With this appointment he was much pleased, as it led to a more intimate acquaintance with that venerable man, and tended to invigorate his faith and piety.

While at Middlebury, he was in an excellent school both for his understanding and his heart. In addition to the pious instruction enjoyed in college, in the sanctuary, he was permitted to witness four revivals of religion. In the promotion of at least three of them, he was in some degree instrumental.

His usefulness, while in college, was considerable. His amiable deportment, uniform piety, and Christian faithfulness, will doubtless be remembered by a goodly number with unceasing gratitude. Many of his leisure hours were employed in religious conversation with his fellow students; others were spent in visiting from house to house, and recommending that Redeemer on whom he believed. He was generally accompanied in his excursions by a Christian brother, and often by that dear friend, who has since been his companion in labour and tribulation. In July, 1812, while many were celebrating our nation's birth-day, Mr. Parsons and the writer walked four miles, and

after we commenced our labour of love, called at every house, conversed with every individual, and prayed in every family. At another time he wandered alone a short distance from college, and called at a house, where was a company of young ladies, all strangers. At first he hesitated whether to introduce religious conversation, fearing it would be unwelcome. But reflecting on his covenant vows, and that he must meet these young immortals in judgment, he tenderly and faithfully recommended to their consideration the importance of early piety. When he departed, all were solemn, and some in tears. Toward the close of his senior year, he went several times to some of the mountain towns in the vicinity of Middlebury, and assisted scattered disciples there in the devotions of the Sabbath. Justice requires me to state that these labours of love were not performed at the expense of college duties. In his attention to these he was conscientiously and minutely faithful. And though not actuated by a worldly ambition, few, if any, have been more anxious to store their minds with useful knowledge, or more diligent in the pursuit.

As there has been invariably a friendly intercourse between the people of Middlebury and the members of college, the pious student has frequent opportunities of doing good. Of these Mr Parsons availed himself; but the extent of his usefulness while in College cannot be ascertained at present; nor will it be accurately known, till that day when the good and evil of our lives, with all their momentous consequences, will be disclosed to a wondering world. It is, however, already known that his Christian faithfulness was in a number of instances, owned and honoured by the Holy Spirit. I shall adduce one instance as a specimen of the rest. It is taken from "The Richmond Family Visitor," Va.; and styled "A Tribute to Mr. Parsons." It is dated Norfolk, July 13, 1822. The writer, supposed to be a Presbyterian clergyman of

that place, says, "a few years since it was my happiness to enjoy the acquaintance and friendship of Mr. Parsons, while we were members of Middlebury college, in Vermont. At that time I was young and thoughtless, and in all that relates to personal piety, worse than indifferent. Mr. P. took frequent opportunities of conversing with me on this momentous subject. It was my first resolve to shun his society, or directly desire him to be less concerned about me. But his piety was so deep and ingenuous,—was so unequivocally yet unostentatiously manifested in all his actions, words and looks, that before I was aware of it, he had gained an access to my hardened bosom, and excited the first serious solicitude for my immortal interests. The friendly firmness with which he alarmed my fears, the fidelity and intelligence with which he illustrated the plan of redemption by an Almighty and Divine Saviour, the affection which breathed through his manner, and the chastened rapture with which he used to speak of the life and immortality offered through Christ to the penitent,—should excite an affectionate remembrance of my sainted friend, with the warmest gratitude to him from whom all holy desires, all good counsels, and just works do proceed."

If all candidates for the Gospel ministry were as pious and active as the subject of this memoir, our colleges, already one of the brightest ornaments of our country, would be a richer blessing, and send forth deeper and broader streams to "make glad the city of God." Many youth in the walks of science, unmindful of God and heaven, might be quickened and sanctified by grace, become heralds of the cross, and turn many from darkness to light. Or should some, rescued from ruin by the blessing of heaven upon Christian faithfulness, fill important stations in civil life, their influence would be of immense value to the cause of Christ.

The private journal and letters of Mr. Parsons form the most important materials for his history during his residence at Andover.

Journal—"*Sabbath*, *December* 18, 1814.—My heart, how desperately wicked! It renders duty a burden, the Sabbath wearisome, and my whole life unpleasant. Long have I desired to subdue it, but the work still remains to be done. I condemn its wanderings, and then listen to its desires. In my hours of retirement, it allures my mind away from God; it deceives and poisons. Often when I would commune with God, I commune with the world. Even before the excellency of the Saviour, the society of saints, and the joys of heaven, my mind frequently prefers the grovelling objects of sense. How long shall I be a slave, a stranger to heaven! O for spiritual weapons to fight against the world! O happy hour, when I shall be able to keep my heart from sin. This will make heaven pleasant. There will be no wanderings, no drowsiness nor inactivity. The joy will be perfect and increasing forever. What soul does not faint for the courts of our God?

"I never read the works of Baxter, Flavel, Doddridge, and other pious fathers in the church, without being ashamed of myself. They walked by faith, fought with spiritual weapons, made rapid advances in grace, and were dead to the world. Their memory is blessed. But O how little enjoyment I have; how little courage in heavenly things! How unlike the martyrs and saints before me! Blessed Jesus, I daily and hourly dishonour thy cause. My wound is incurable without thine aid. Still permit a wretch to plead for the greatest privilege, that of being dead to the world, and alive to thee. I am utterly insufficient for the work; wilt thou, O my Saviour, assist me by thy Spirit. Make me thine wholly and forever. O that this week might be spent more to the glory of thy name. I humbly desire to be kept from foolish conversation, from vain and sinful thoughts. Pre-

serve me from making undue reflections on the conduct of others. I would constantly consider myself in the presence of God. As piety is the most important qualification of a minister, I would endeavour to hold constant communion with my Saviour, converse frequently with my heart, and read the Scriptures with solemnity and prayer. I hope to inquire every evening whether I have served God aright, and then compose myself to sleep in the arms of my Saviour. First when I awake, I would raise my thoughts to God. When I walk with my fellow-students, I would have devotional and interesting subjects employ our time. As neglect of these duties has been the cause of my stupidity, I would implore divine assistance to reform. Now, O my Saviour, thou knowest my weakness; I humbly plead to be remembered in thy covenant, to be saved from a cold and barren heart, and to be prepared to serve thee and my generation with fidelity. Amen."

"Piety is the most important qualification of a minister." This remark, though not new, deserves to be inscribed in capitals in the study of every minister, and every candidate for the ministry. What but the want of fervent, enlightened piety frequently renders the ministrations even of evangelical clergymen languid and ineffectual? The most acute and accomplished theologian, without ardent love to God and man, does little good; while one far his inferior in other respects, but possessing this high qualification, is often the honoured instrument of bringing many souls to glory.

"*Lord's Day, December* 26, 1814.—During the last week had some intervals of religious enjoyment; but much coldness and stupidity. When will the happy time arrive, in which I shall have nothing to lament; my heart be kept with all diligence, my conversation be heavenly, my joy uninterrupted? Reviewing my conduct for a few days, I find much to condemn. Little does my life resemble that of my glorious pattern.

The world steals upon my affections, and robs me of my joy; and I fear it will rob me of the crown of glory reserved for the humble followers of the Lamb. One morning, I suffered the world to occupy the time which ought to have been devoted to secret devotion, and bitter was the effect. I count that day lost; God forgive. Let this teach me the danger of neglecting duty. The severe affliction of being deprived of my sight for a number of days, I hope will be sanctified Should I finally lose my sight, God would be just, and worthy of my highest praise. But this would deprive me of the opportunity of preaching the Gospel, which I most ardently desire, and cut off my most sanguine expectations. Still I ought not to complain. God has other means of advancing his kingdom, and of evangelising the heathen. But I would humbly beg to be an instrument in his hand of saving souls; 'nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done.'

"1815.—This year is ushered in by a pleasant sun, a sacred day, a happy emblem of that day, which shall complete the joys of the saints. This desirable period will be the commencement of new pleasures, new enjoyments, new discoveries. The dear delights which we here call a foretaste of heaven, will be mightily increased. The spirit no longer encumbered with flesh, no longer perplexed with doubts and trials, will be presented spotless before the throne of God, having been washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb. There the Sun of Righteousness will shed his brightest beams, and discover his unclouded glory. There the saints will drink of the river of life. The wonders of redeeming grace will be continually unfolding, and the heirs of glory will rise nearer and nearer to God, and enjoy increasing happiness without the possibility of being satiated. With one voice and heart, they will exclaim, 'worthy art thou, O Lord, to receive glory and honour, dominion and might.' That I may be prepared to bear a humble part in this holy employment, I desire

to dedicate to my Redeemer all my powers and services this year. I desire to commence a new life with God, to reform wherein I have erred; to honour my Redeemer; to advance the happiness of my fellow-creatures, and to be assimilated to the divine image. O my God, I am ignorant, wilt thou teach me; I am weak, wilt thou breathe upon me, by thy Holy Spirit, and I shall live. O Holy Ghost, sanctifier of hearts, renovate my mind, purify my soul, and make me a vessel of mercy prepared unto glory. Grant me thy gracious influences this year. Keep me from falling into any sin; make me truly penitent and submissive; guide me in duty; enlighten my understanding; strengthen my mental faculties; enable me to obtain a complete victory over my heart, and to increase in wisdom and grace for Jesus's sake. It shall be my constant prayer, by divine assistance, to be preserved from a vain and impenitent heart, from unchristian conversation, from foolish thoughts, from a formal observance of sacred duties, from the appearance of vanity before the world or my fellow-students, from indulging an impatient disposition, from hasty and unsuitable reflections upon the characters of others, from imbibing erroneous sentiments, and from *pride*, that *enemy* of all happiness, that *destroyer* of souls. To avoid these evils, it shall be my constant effort to render my mind devotional in secret; and never to neglect, nor hastily perform, those duties, which are the life of the Christian. I would have the word of God familiar, and my mind deeply impressed with its sacred truths. My conversation must be chaste; my seasons of meditation frequent; the sins, which easily beset me, critically watched, and my life uniformly serious and devout. I must watch unto prayer, till every enemy is subdued, till the heart is completely sanctified, and the soul prepared to mingle with the general assembly of the saints in worlds of light."

From a letter to his parents, dated January 5, 1815, I make the following extract:—

"Your letter was refreshing to my drooping spirits. True, as there observed, 'pride kills the Christian.' Being unguarded in this respect has cost me much trouble and sorrow, and given me reason for lasting humiliation. The individual, who anticipates entering the ministry, should suitably consider the sacredness of the work. To mistake here is fatal. When a minister falls, he seems to tear down the pillars of the church. An irreligious minister may flourish for a time, but he most certainly will be made an *example* of the divine displeasure. It will be manifest to the world, that the man who trusts to himself is a fool. How can an ungodly minister teach a religion, the power of which he never felt? When called to the death-bed of a saint, will not conscience tell him, that the ground on which he stands is holy? Will he not hear a voice, saying, 'This is too nigh heaven for thee?' I doubt not but I shall have your daily prayers, that this character may never be mine."

It is said of the excellent and lamented Henry Martyn that he took the Rev. David Brainerd for his model. I do not know that Mr Parsons selected any one in particular; but the following extract from his journal will not, it is presumed, be uninteresting.

"*January* 8, 1815.—Much refreshed this day by perusing the life of Brainerd. How completely devoted to God, how ardent his affections! What thirsting after holiness, what love for souls! His life was short, but brilliant and useful. He ushered in a glorious day to the church. Counting pain and distress, and every bodily infirmity as dross, he patiently encountered difficulties and dangers, and at last sweetly resigned his all to his Saviour. Multitudes will have reason to call him blessed. Many perishing Indians will remember his earnest desire for their good, with gratitude and love. He has taught the world an important lesson, and enforced it by a powerful

example, that the Indians are capable of civilization, and susceptible of the finer feelings of humanity.

"How important the object of sending them the Gospel, and of instructing them in the way of life. What objection to so noble an undertaking? Will any plead that they have hostile dispositions? Who, I ask, has not? While unassisted by divine truth, will their situation ever be changed for the better? Must these suffering millions, who have the greatest demand upon our charity, lose eternal enjoyment, and become heirs of perdition? Reason, religion forbids. Will any plead that the time has not come to enlighten them? Vain mortals, claiming the prerogative of God, and condemning nations to ignorance—presumptuous excuse for indolence! Will any bring it to the bar of God, when these wretched Indians point to us, as the cause of their ruin? Had the Apostles and primitive Christians indulged the same excuse, our situation would have been as deplorable as theirs. Let us then press forward with a zeal worthy of so good a cause. Let it never be said that the Indians will not embrace the Gospel, till the experiment has been fairly tried; and when Divine Providence cries forbear, we may rid our skirts of their blood, and have the satisfaction of having done our duty."

"*Sabbath evening.*—Had some satisfaction in the sanctuary, some pantings after holiness. But O my foolish heart! It leads me astray, and sends leanness into my soul. It is but a moment I can fix my attention on God, or taste celestial joys; the world affords some subject of amusement, and gains my heart. In the forenoon, during the first prayer, I endeavoured to guard my thoughts, and fix my mind on the solemnity of the employment. I was immediately attacked. When one subject was not sufficient to turn my mind from God, another was presented still more alluring, till I fell. How inadequate to keep my own heart! Do the saints sanctified know no such trials? then happy, happy state of glory! Let it be

my constant employment this week to guard my thoughts in prayer. O for divine assistance!"

Extracts from a letter to an afflicted relative, who had been bereaved of her eldest son, and soon after of her eldest daughter, in an unexpected manner.

"*Andover, January* 25, 1815.

"My Dear Aunt,—Your situation in this time of affliction is continually on my mind. Truly the hand of God is heavy upon you. In the most unexpected manner have your hopes been cut off, and your cup made bitter with wormwood and gall. The first affliction made your heart bleed; but when your tears were scarcely dried for a beloved son, God said, it is not enough, I must take another, and cause renewed weeping and mourning. God has done it; his glory required it; the good of the universe required it, shall we ask the reason why? Sufficient for us is the fact, that it was devised in infinite wisdom. The true believer desires no more. His mind is calm because God has done it. It is the language of every sanctified heart, 'though he slay me, yet will I trust in him.' 'Though afflictions be repeated, I will not complain.' Thus the saint has peace; he lies at Jesus' feet; he bows in submission to the will of his Father.

"I trust, my dear aunt, that these are your feelings, that you can say, these afflictions profit me. If so, what reason to rejoice! you may look forward to the period when God shall wipe away all tears, when your heart shall no more beat with sorrow, and break with grief. One smile from Jesus will fill the soul with rapture. Hereafter we shall look back with surprise upon our conduct here. We shall wonder that we endured afflictions with so little fortitude,—that we were no more humbled under the chastisements of a kind and merciful Parent. The situation of the person who is afflicted, and has no interest in the Re-

deemer's blood, calls for the compassion of every feeling heart. At that day when the saints shall be openly acknowledged and acquitted, he will have the bitter reflection that his sorrow is the beginning of sorrows. What reason have we to rejoice that we hope in the mercy of God. Bear then, Dear aunt, your trials with Christian resignation; compose your mind with this truth, that all things work together for the good of the redeemed. Although our Lord delay his coming, yet he will certainly remember his covenant; and in the best time accomplish his purposes. He will bear you in the arms of his love, and present you spotless before his throne with exceeding joy."

Most of the thoughts penned in Mr. Parsons' journal of February 8, appear to be the substance of an address delivered to his class. Their excellence will be a sufficient apology for their insertion.

"Particularly we were reminded of the necessity of cultivating a devotional spirit, of living near the throne of grace. Make piety your supreme object; let your studies never intrude on those hours, which God demands as his own. Hold constant communion with heaven. Keep your hearts constantly warm with grace. What will it avail you, if you should store up a vast fund of knowledge, and leave your hearts barren? It is murdering time; it is robbing the church of Christ; it is destroying souls. We fear you will fail here. Do you wish for usefulness? Be *pious*. Do you wish to be successful in the ministry? Be *distinguished* for *piety*. Do you wish to spend your time pleasantly? Be *pious*. Finally, your all depends upon it. We beseech you not to let a day pass without much reflection, without ardent prayer."

"*February* 28.—Set apart this day for fasting; particularly to deplore the barrenness of my heart, my lifelessness in religion, my practical infidelity, and likewise to implore the Divine blessing upon * * *

and * * * who are in great distress for sin; that God would give them the joy of believing, the consolations of his Spirit. In connection with these subjects the case of my own brother * * * who is about entering upon his studies, impressed my mind;—that God would sanctify his heart, make him an instrument of good, and receive him to glory.

"A profitable season. Was enabled to see more of the pride of my heart, the hatefulness of sin, my absolute dependence on sovereign grace. No grace I more need, and for which I more earnestly pray, than *humility;* to possess the disposition of a child, to copy the example of Jesus. 'Search me, O God, and try my ways! purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean.' I hope in a merciful God: I would confide in his government. O that I might plead till I die for my brother * * * * that his soul may be saved. O that all the saints might pray for him continually, and may God be merciful for his name's sake."

From a letter to his eldest brother written about the same time, I make the following extracts:—

"The period of peace was ushered in, by the ringing of bells, the roaring of cannons, and shouts of joy, in this place. At eight o'clock at night we were alarmed by the tumult, and preparing to hear the cry of '*fire;*' but how different, it was 'peace, peace.' For about two hours we did nothing but shake hands. The countenances well expressed the language of the heart. One observes, 'we can now go to India;' another, 'we can now distribute Bibles;' and all say, 'Zion will now prosper.' How different from the language of the world. It all centered in God. The gentleman, who brought the news from New York to Boston, rode himself to death. Poor man! The news arrived in Portland at midnight, and excited a universal cry of 'fire.' You will rejoice with all the

friends of our country, that the sword may now be returned to its scabbard. Of this enough."

"I was much interested yesterday by receiving particulars from China. It is found that the Chinese language is as perfect and easy to be understood, as our own. The account that the language consists of fifteen thousand characters, and cannot be acquired in a whole life, is a mere fable. The Chinese are well polished, remarkably fond of reading, but perfectly averse to every thing foreign. We shall be able to obtain a dictionary and grammar in that language soon, and can study to great advantage. I mention this as a singular omen for good to the church. God is speaking peace to the troubled world, and preparing the way for the universal propagation of truth. Bending from his throne, he says to his servants, 'Go preach the gospel to every creature, for the set time to favour Zion is come.' We hear his voice and obey his command. We dedicate all that we have to the advancement of Zion, not holding our lives dear to us, nor seeking any worldly happiness. The present eventful period calls for universal thanksgiving and praise. God has pleaded his own cause, averted the stroke that was aimed against the church, broken the arm of the oppressor, and verified his promise that 'no weapon formed against her shall prosper.' Hail auspicious era! dawn of millennial glory, birth-day of the world! We look forward with pleasing emotions to that period, when anthems to Jesus shall be heard from the lips of Greenlanders; when the degraded Hottentot shall joyfully receive the honours of the Gospel; when the learned Hindoo shall tread upon his idols; when the unbelieving Jew shall look on him whom he has pierced, and mourn; when the whole world shall unite in ascribing 'blessing, and honour, dominion, and might to him who was slain, and hath redeemed us by his blood.' Cold is that heart which is not fired with

this celestial theme. To be uninterested here, is a certain token of a heart opposed to God. How important, then, that our hearts be changed. How vain to expect happiness without!

"My health is good at present. Time glides pleasantly away."

Extract from a letter dated March 2d.

"One thing more I have to lament respecting my college life, that is, neglect of private devotions. It is not sufficient that these duties be observed daily; but they must be attended to with fervour and humility. A man's private and public character always move together. If constant communion with God be not held in secret, it will be observed; it will remove every source of inward delight, and render us unfit for any office in the church.

'What hero like the man who stands himself,
And dares to meet his naked heart alone,
And hear intrepid the full charge it brings.'"

The semi-annual fast of the theological seminary occurred this year on the 3d of March. Some of Mr. Parsons's devotional exercises, as recorded in his journal for this day, are deemed worthy of preservation.

"There appears to prevail a general spirit of prayer in this institution. A number of my classmates, who a few weeks since were criminally stupid, are now confessing their sins, and rejoicing in God. How pleasant to see Christians live consistently, to exemplify in their daily deportment that important grace, *humility*,—to evince to the world, what they believe, that they are strangers and pilgrims. Had this temper *universally* prevailed in the church, infidels could never have cast such reproaches upon Christ; superstition would have been unknown;

Christian zeal would have been attended with knowledge; sectarianism would not have existed.

"The whole domain of Christianity would not have afforded ground to erect a temple to discord. The evils, then, which Christians so sincerely lament, are in a considerable degree produced by their own coldness. The amazing guilt, which I have contracted in this way, must crush me forever, unless sovereign grace interpose; and the evil which I have brought upon souls calls loudly for repentance and everlasting humility."

Extracts from a letter to his Mother.

"*March* 4, 1815.

"My Dear Mother,—For a considerable time after I arrived at this seminary, God was pleased not only to take from me my usual health; but to withdraw the light of his countenance. He was pleased to show me the vileness of my heart; the criminality of my life, and my desert of his frowns. Then my eyes run down with tears, because I had offended a holy God. I was as a dove bereft of her mate. I went mourning all the day. I sought my Saviour in the closet, in his sanctuary, among his saints; but found him not. But I think I know, my dear mother, what it is to be washed in that fountain which is opened for sinners. The load of guilt which pressed me down, is removed. Jesus smiles; my heart is refreshed, my thoughts elevated to heaven. Friday last was the best day I have ever had. Never did the Saviour appear more lovely, more exalted. Never were religious duties more pleasant. My soul walked from earth to heaven, from time to eternity, and mingled with the songs of the redeemed. The holy Jesus condescended to commune with me; to show me the richness of his character, to speak peace to my troubled mind. Such a season outweighs the world; it strips earth of its charms, time of its splendours; it gives to

eternity its solemnities and its pleasures. Many of my brethren in this seminary had the same feelings, and at the same time. Many observed that they never witnessed a season like that; that they never knew what it was to love the brethren before, to see Jesus with spiritual eyes At four o'clock Dr. Woods gave us a most interesting sermon from Rev. iii. 17, 18. He was deeply interested, and spoke with eternity in view. Christians hung on his lips, and when he spake of the fulness of Jesus to save, their hearts melted within them. O for such a Saviour who would not die! How sweet to sit at Jesus' feet for ever, and sing his praise. Heaven would be no joy to the saints, if Jesus were absent; earth has no charms without him. Will you not, my dear mother, give me up for this Saviour? I know you will.

"How affecting to see proud sinners bow the knee to God! One person, a few days since, came into my room, and upon his knees entreated me to pray for him; and this very person but lately would have considered it a disgrace to bow even to a king. How astonishingly this evinces the truth of our holy religion! Every thing that exalteth itself against God shall be brought low.

"When I reflect upon the distance at which I have kept from heaven, and my present weakness, my mind involuntary adopts the language of Dr. Watts,

> 'Those holy joys, my God, restore,
> And guard me that I fall no more.'

"This, I trust, will be your continual prayer for me; and may we at last enter upon the recompence of reward, through free grace."

Extract from a letter of Mr. Parsons to a relative, dated

"*March* 23, 1815.

"Your letter, my dear cousin, was received with peculiar pleasure. Letters from friends were never

more acceptable than at present. Separated as I am from every relative, and from almost every former acquaintance, I not unfrequently indulge moments of despondency. There are no privileges, however distinguished and precious, that can render my friends less dear, their society less desirable. Were it not for the presence of Jesus, that friend of the friendless, who could bear the cold civility of strangers, the solitude of a foreign land? But with this Saviour, what stranger is not a friend, what wilderness does not smile? These or similar feelings, I think, have been mine of late. I find great advantage by being retired from the world, and by enjoying undisturbed communion with my heart. It is in the calm recesses of the mind that Jesus delights to dwell; and every Christian can say, that his views of God are most satisfactory, when he lives nearest to heaven. The world deceives by its flatteries, and wounds the pious heart by its pleasures. And strange to tell, the Christian who has been a thousand times pierced by such pleasures, loves them still. When, dear F———, shall we love only that which Jesus loves? when shall we be engaged in no employment but his? Do I ask when? When it is best. How often have I desired to go to heaven without a sigh—to wear a crown without a cross!

"The glimpse which I had of late of the corruption of my heart, has almost destroyed my hope. Had I to contend alone with this enemy, my heart, where would be the victory? Where would be the reward? 'But thanks be unto God, who giveth us the victory!' How can I mourn, when my Saviour smiles. Now I look at my enemies, and behold they are gone."

Respecting the observance and improvement of the Sabbath, I find in Mr. Parsons's journal for March 26, 1815, some thoughts, which will doubtless be interesting to every Christian reader. Allowing for difference in external circumstances, they teach us

how all ought to improve that sacred day. "The best manner of spending the Sabbath has long been the subject of my inquiry. And while I look back upon my misimprovement of holy time with regret, and tremble at the guilt which I have contracted, it is the earnest desire of my heart and constant prayer, to observe it in a manner, which will advance my spiritual improvement, and glorify my Redeemer. For this purpose I would relax in the labours of the week by Saturday noon, spend the afternoon in making such preparations as are requisite, and turn my mind to a contemplation of the privileges of the Sabbath. At sunset I would dismiss the world, reclaim my thoughts, examine my heart, read a portion of Scripture, and humbly implore the Divine assistance. I would spend the evening in meditating upon devotional subjects. At eight o'clock meet with the students for prayer; endeavour to keep my mind in a serious, heavenly frame. Having returned from conference, I would read the Bible, engage in social and private worship; retire in season, raise my mind to God before closing my eyes, that he would keep me from worldly dreams,—from awaking with a cold heart. I would awake early, and raise my eyes to my Preserver in thankfulness and gratitude, beseeching him to guard me through the day from attending temptations, and give vigour and life to all my sacred duties. In my private and public duties I would keep my mind guarded from vain thoughts, from trifling away the time. When I enter the sanctuary, I would bear it in mind that it is the Lord's house; when returning, reflect upon the privileges I have enjoyed, and learn to improve by them.

"*Saturday, sunset.*—Entered upon holy time. World I dismiss you; I command you in the name of Jesus, come not hither to disturb my peace; away with your cares, your perplexities, your pleasures. I have employment too noble for you. Vain heart, be in subjection to Jesus; let him reign exclusively;

seek no longer your trifles; Jesus is to be your guest. O prepare him room; provide for his entertainment, and wait patiently for his word."

From the above extract the reader will perceive that Mr. Parsons supposed the evening preceding the Sabbath to be holy time. On this point Christians differ in opinion. It would, however, be the height of bigotry to suffer such a difference to mar the joys of Christian fellowship.

Extract from his Journal, *April* 6, 1815.—"I would not lift my hand to choose where I must labour. I will let Jesus choose for me. If he go with me, I can go into a dungeon, and spend my life in irons. His presence among the degraded Hottentots would more delight me than a throne. I ask not for worldly pleasures, for wreaths of honour, for desks of popularity; I ask for the continued presence of Jesus; I ask no more."

Extracts from a letter to one of his brothers.

"You say you are 'determined to seek durable riches.' Never relinquish this determination. The door of mercy is opened, and Jesus stands with open arms to receive you. Christians are praying for you with tears. Angels are waiting to receive you to their communion.

"I trust you see your danger and your remedy. Is it not surprising mercy in God, that he still calls and invites you, notwithstanding he has been so often rejected? Does it not at times make your heart bleed, when you consider how you have treated that Being, who has been so kind and tender a parent to you? Yet there is hope. Although thousands have been to Christ, there is still an infinite fulness. No sinner ever came to him in vain. Are we in continual fear and anxiety respecting futurity? He can calm the tumult of our minds. Are we poor? With him are eternal riches. Are we polluted with sin? He can cleanse the soul. Have you any

wants, any sorrows? Go to Jesus with them, and and he will more than satisfy you. Let me entreat you to go immediately. Delay a few days, and it may be eternally too late. The disease of your mind may become incurable; the patience of God may be exhausted; and your doom may be written upon the gate of heaven, 'Thou art weighed in the balances and art found wanting.'

"Trust only in God; submit to the cross as a condemned criminal. Repentance is the only way to heaven. How can you rest while your soul is suspended over the devouring pit? Now while you are reading this letter, let me pray you to retire to your closet, and give yourself to your offended Judge."

About this time, Mr. Parsons was deprived of a very dear friend, Mr. Philanthropos Perry, a classmate and room-mate in the theological seminary at Andover. He first received the painful intelligence from a newspaper when he was at Boston. It would appear that he had been much with him during his illness. In the prospect of his death he thus expresses himself:—

"*Boston, May*, 1815.

"You cannot well imagine the feelings of my mind, while accompanying my dear room-mate down the vale of death. I weep while I tell you, that our souls were knit together in love, and our prospects of mutual enjoyment fair and promising. This, we did hope, would be of no short continuance; that we might labour long in the same vineyard, and enter at last upon the same recompence of reward. How soon is that lovely youth to be called to heaven! I mourn in silence, but I mourn with hope. He will soon, we believe, mingle in a society infinitely more pleasant and delightful than the one he leaves, and experience joys too refined for earth. He can triumph with eternity in view, and sing, 'O death where is thy sting! O grave where is thy victory!'"

Having been absent from his friend at the time of his death, he thus writes:—

"*Boston, June* 9, 1815.

"Although I ought to have expected this, and even did expect it, yet the intelligence was so affecting that I yielded for a moment to the influence of unavailing sorrow. Could I have heard him lisp, with his expiring voice, his last farewell, and seen him take his joyful flight to the mansions of the just, it would have relieved essentially the pressure of my grief. I have every reason, however, to be still, and to rejoice under this mysterious providence. I frequently inquire, why could not my life have been taken instead of his, which promised extensive usefulness? But let infinite wisdom direct. Mr. Perry's life, though short, has been very useful, After he became a member of the theological seminary, it appears that God wonderfully prepared his mind for the trials that awaited him. His mind was much employed in cultivating a near and constant communion with his Redeemer. Often would he speak of the pleasures he derived from retirement, and of the triumphs of a Christian's death. Often would his heart swell with benevolence for the perishing heathen, as well as for sinners around him; while the prospect of devoting his whole life to this cause, added not a little to his enjoyment. The last composition which he exhibited in public, was upon the Christian warfare. Dear youth, how soon is that warfare completed; how soon thy victory obtained! How soon crowned with glory!

"After his disease assumed a dangerous appearance, he observed, 'I have no desire to live, if Jesus calls me home. I esteem it an unspeakable blessing, that I may so soon partake of that rest, which remaineth for the people of God.' He was asked, what would you now do, if the Redeemer was no more than a man? 'I could,' says he, 'place no more dependance upon him than upon any other man.' His last day was one of the most joyful which was ever

witnessed. When his limbs had become cold with death, he never expressed a fear, nor heaved a sigh. He took an affectionate leave of all around him, exhorting the saints to greater diligence and zeal; while, as with a voice from the grave, he proclaimed the certain and awful doom of the sinner. While looking into eternity, the final punishment of the impenitent appeared so dreadful, that he wept for them. When death approached, he smiled for joy. Then the spirit fled, attended by angels to the embraces of his Redeemer, while all who stood by his bed could exclaim, 'O let my last end be like his!'—O my brother! my brother! would to God I had died for thee!

"No infidel ever died in this manner. Paine, with his boasted philosophy, with all his exertions to fortify his mind against the fear of death, was compelled to yield to the gnawings of a guilty conscience, and to exclaim with horror and despair, 'O Jesus save me.' Hume, the celebrated infidel, to appease his troubled breast, spent his last hours in conversation upon the most vain and trifling subjects. He did not meet death like a man, as he boasted, but like a beast. Our religion affords a certain refuge in the hour of death, and presents a rational and joyful hope of future blessedness. But the impenitent often meet death with unspeakable anguish, as it hurries them into the presence of an offended Judge."

That this bereavement was sanctified to him will appear from the following extract from a letter to his mother:—

"*Andover, June* 27, 1815.

"My Dear Mother,—Will a line from your absent son be unwelcome? True, I cannot refresh your spirit by a particular statement of revivals of religion; and perhaps the various operations of my own mind will be only what you continually experience to a greater degree. With you, my mother, I use

freedom; I can tell you of joys and sorrows, which, if related openly, would merit the charge of pride and ostentation. I can tell you what are my views of Christ, of heaven, and of death. For some weeks after the decease of my dear room-mate, I yielded to improper grief, and refused to be comforted. This, as it ought, kept me in darkness and doubt. But since I have given God the right of governing, he has given me the joys of believing. He met me, while I was yet afar off, and embraced me in the arms of his love. He kindly said, 'why weepest thou,' and then wiped the falling tear from my eye. O how could I be so sorrowful, since the promises of the gospel can never fail! My thoughts have been particularly turned to the subject of death. I have viewed it very near and very pleasant. I can find nothing in this gloomy vale to terrify or injure; for the Saviour is there. His rod and staff will defend and comfort. Death is pleasant as it terminates this course of sin, and liberates the soul from her long captivity. The struggling of the mind will then cease, cares, anxiety and trouble will no longer attend us; they cannot pass the banks of Jordan. But the peculiar pleasure which death affords, is the glory which it reveals.—Fix the eye upon heaven, and where is the dread and sting of death? Walk but a few moments the city of God, and contemplate the perfection and beauty which is there displayed, and where are the ties which bind us to earth? Who, that has his soul inflamed with a glimpse of heaven, could not say,

> 'Come death, shake hands,
> I kiss thy bands,
> 'Tis happiness for me to die.'

It adds much to the enjoyment of the Christian to hold familiar and constant converse with death.

> 'Why should the children of a king
> Go mourning all their days.'

Why should we fear to die, when Jesus has gone before us?

"I have had of late a faint view of the joys of the redeemed. It has made my stay in the flesh almost a burden. This body of mine is wearisome to me. I long at times to be unburdened, that I may mingle in that blessed society. Do you ask how I can be willing to die when my sins are so aggravated? I have tried to be terrified with this idea, but there is no ground for it. What! cannot God pardon them? Without atoning blood my first offence would ruin me for ever. With it, sin will not debar the soul from happiness. Sometimes, when I view myself the greatest sinner, I have the greatest hope of pardon. The fulness of Christ surpasses the guilt of the most abandoned sinner. Jesus is my hope my confidence, and my glory. On his arm I can rest my weary soul; to his care commit my temporal and immortal interests.

"It afforded me much pleasure that my mother so cheerfully gave me up to the directions of the Saviour. I doubt not but that this resignation would support you, even if I should die in early life. I cannot make any calculations as to my future life. I would wait with patience the direction of Providence. My friends may rest assured that I regard my health as the greatest earthly blessing, and shall spare no time or expense to preserve it."

Extract of a letter to a friend in Lewis, New York, dated

"*Pittsfield, Vt. November* 3, 1815.

"No human foresight can prevent disappointments or insure success. It is the Christian's duty, as well as his glory, to commit his all to the disposal of infinite wisdom, and to rest satisfied that an infinite mind does direct. The moment I plan for future joys on earth, the voice of Perry is heard from the grave, 'He builds too low, who builds beneath the skies.'—

There is much advantage in keeping our end in sight, always looking for the coming of our Lord and Saviour. It prevents that attachment to the world which kills devotion, and benumbs every feeling of piety. It enables us to use the world as not abusing it, while we patiently wait for a better state, even an heavenly."

Extract of a letter to the compiler and Mrs. M.*

"*Andover*, *January* 10, 1815.

"My Dear Friends,—Last new year's day I received information that I had been raised to a new station, and must sustain a new relation to my friends. I was informed of the appointment to the office of an uncle, which seemed to add to my age and dignity. Now all this revolution is said to arise from a stranger in your family, who, I conceive, must be of some influence, for he has already made grand parents, uncles, and aunt. Tell me, does he not assume considerable authority; does he not sometimes shake his fist as if he would command silence? Does he not seem to say, strange world this, and then again more mildly smile at his follies? I should like to see this little champion, and talk a little about matters; but you will do it for me.

"But I will speak more plainly and more seriously. The treasure committed to your keeping is of amazing importance, and is most intimately connected with eternity. You may carry in your arms a minister, or a missionary of the cross. You certainly have one who will shortly be an inhabitant of eternity, and may by grace shine as a star in the kingdom of heaven. O then, while it is lent you, use it as the Lord's; give it not too much of your affections; give it not too little of your fears. Carefully nourish it as a plant in the garden of God, water it with your

* There is here a pleasing specimen of innocent playfulness mingled with the deepest piety.—Ed.

tears and daily prayers, and perhaps it may be precious and lovely in the eyes of our Redeemer. Perhaps, in the ordinance of baptism, more depends upon the feelings of parents than is generally considered. If the offering is made in faith, will not God regard it? If the child is lent to the Lord as long as he lives, will not God sanctify him as he did young Samuel?

"I cannot forget your dear people. May I not believe that a work has already commenced, which will prevail till all are interested in it by a saving faith? I have often thought of the resolution of Miss S. Anthony, to pray for Zion as her constant employment. Are there not such pious females in your church, who accomplish much in their closets? Surely God will not disregard the cries of his children, but will reward them abundantly in his own time. I know your anxiety for the return of the Holy Spirit, and I am certain, if you continue to wait on the Lord, he will visit your people with his smiles, and gather many souls into his kingdom.

"It must be one of the most difficult things in the world to unite a popular discourse with unaffected humility; Christian liberality with sinless compliance; duties to our benefactors with gospel admonitions. I find it next to impossible to use the world without being absorbed in its concerns; to become all things to all men, and yet conceal nothing of the truth; to be cheerful without vanity; to be serious without austerity. Tell me how close study, intense thinking, can be united with an entire devotedness to God, with a holy panting after divine knowledge.

"O when will a cold heart cease to perplex me? when will pride be subdued, vain thoughts suppressed, and my whole life exhibit the meekness and simplicity of the gospel? Is not the conflict with sin so severe at times, that death may appear desirable? Well might the Psalmist exclaim, 'I shall be satisfied when I awake in thy likeness.'

"I have commenced an examination of the subject of missions, and expect to go through a course of reading before I can decide the course to take. The Indians in the west have a special claim upon our benevolence, and I cannot but hope that the set time to favour Zion in those parts is come. Brother Fisk is inquiring, 'Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?' and some others think seriously of a missionary life. You will, my brother and sister, make it your daily request, that I may be guided by the Holy Spirit. I am no longer my own. If the Lord should refer the subject to my choice, I would refer it back to him. I have no wish to choose for myself, but can only say, 'make me to know the way wherein I should walk, for I lift up my soul unto thee.'"

Extracts from a letter to Mrs. M. dated

Andover, January 18, 1816.

"My Dear Sister,—My health was never better, and my spirits never in brisker motion. Divine favours have surrounded me since I returned, and arms of infinite love upheld me. Duty requires a grateful acknowledgment, but too often my conduct resembles the rebellious Israelites, whom favours destroyed.

"I rejoice to hear of your comfortable state of health, and that God has blessed you with a fine son. Truly you cannot forget his mercies, nor despise his love. You will not, I hope, consider this favour as your own. It is only lent you for the present, for your comfort and for your improvement. Should you use it improperly, love it too much, or place it between God and your affections, it will be taken away. How admirable was the resolution of Hannah, who left her darling child in the temple of the Lord, to serve at the altar. She loved her child, but she loved her God more; and faithfully performed her vows. Does not God say, 'nourish this child for me.' May the Lord sanctify its heart, and make it a chosen vessel of grace.

"Females, at the present time, are doing much for the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom. I believe their influence will eventually be the means of extending, far and wide, the knowledge of Jesus. How much have they done by their prayers! Prayer is the mighty engine in the church, which breaks down opposition, and shakes the firm holds of infidelity. The private or social prayers of females may give strength to many feeble Christians, dispel the doubts of many desponding souls, and inspire whole churches with zeal and grace. Through their prayers, missionaries may be successful, and the wilderness rejoice on every side.—Pray much, pray often, pray fervently."

Extract from a letter to his father, of the same date.

"My Dear Father,—Your letter gave wings to my soul. In a moment I was with you, declaring the word of life to a solemn assembly, and witnessing the power of sovereign grace. I reflected with pleasure upon the events which have transpired in Reading, and wished myself there to see the displays of infinite wisdom. I think I shall set out for Vermont in about two months, and should be extremely happy to comply with your request to obtain licence to preach. But I suspect such a thing would be impossible. The professors have refused before, and this year, they are obliged to be more strict still. It would be proper for me to spend next vacation, as I did a few Sabbaths at Bridgewater last fall. If in this way I can assist my father, or advance the cause of Christ, I should rejoice much.—My heart is fixed upon the sacred duties of the ministry; while it is my constant request, 'Lord, make me to know the way wherein I should go; for I lift up my soul unto thee.' The language of my heart is, Lord send me; send me to the ends of the earth; send me far from all that is called comfort;

send me to prison or to death, if it be thy will, and to promote thy cause.—O to be swallowed up in God; to be rid of this proud and selfish heart; to be always supremely delighted with my Master's service! How I need your prayers for more humility, more zeal, more wisdom."

Mr. Parsons had long contemplated the subject of a foreign mission with solemnity and joy; and with an ardent desire, if it were the divine will, to preach to perishing heathen the glad tidings of salvation. But fearful of mistaking the indications of Providence, and the path of duty; fearful of forming a wrong estimate of his qualifications for an undertaking so arduous; he delayed coming to a final decision till some time in the year 1816, which was his second year in the theological seminary. It had become necessary that the question should be speedily and finally decided. For this purpose he instituted an inquiry founded on the question, whether it was *his* duty to become a missionary to the heathen. His reflections upon this subject, he committed to paper, and they form a kind of discourse, with a text or motto taken from Psalm cxliii. The whole is too long for insertion; a part, it is apprehended, will not be unwelcome to the reader. It will show that in coming to the decision already known, he had fully counted the cost.

"Psalm cxliii. 8.

"*Cause me to know the way wherein I should walk; for I lift up my soul unto thee.*'

————'To know the way wherein I should walk,' has long been the prevailing desire of my heart. Sensible of my blindness and ignorance, I have endeavoured 'to lift up my soul unto God.' I hope in his mercy and wait for his salvation. Perhaps he may think upon me for good, and make me rejoice in the manifestation of his love.

"It is my present intention to examine the question. Is it *my duty* to be a missionary?

"That it is the duty of some young men to devote themselves to the missionary cause, I cannot doubt. The heathen must not perish without the bread of life. Obedience to the divine commands, and gratitude for the blessings of the gospel, will not permit so many of our fellow men to remain in ignorance and spiritual death. Their cries must be regarded; their wants must be supplied. But it is not the duty of *all* to go to the heathen. The waste places of Zion must be built up; the gospel must be preached to the millions in our own country, which are perished for lack of knowledge; our churches must be under the care of faithful teachers of divine truth. The present state of the church demands both missionaries and pastors.

"But what is my duty? A question vastly important and momentous. A question which demands the most serious and prayerful attention. Should I err here, it might be at the expense of my usefulness and happiness for life. I desire therefore to proceed with the greatest impartiality and seriousness; sensible of the danger of leaning to my own understanding, and of being influenced by worldly or sinful motives. O Lord, direct me, 'for I lift up my soul unto thee.'

"As it is not by a voice from heaven, nor by any miraculous impulse upon the mind, that duty is made known, I ought to examine the leadings of Providence, my feelings, the feelings of my friends, my health, and my qualifications for a work so important.

"If my feelings are of such a nature as would render me unhappy among the heathen; if my health is insufficient to endure the trials and sacrifices of such a life; if my qualifications are inadequate, duty would require me to engage in some other employment.

1. " What are my feelings upon this subject ?

" Here I must pause and confess, with the deepest regret, that I have not that supreme love to God—that constant uniform concern for souls, which a missionary ought to possess. I have the greatest reason to be humble before God, and to take a low place in the dust at his footstool for the pride of my heart, the criminality of my affections, and for my extreme indifference in his service.

" Notwithstanding my vileness and spiritual blindness, I trust that I have some evidence of a union to Christ, and of a love for his kingdom. At certain seasons, there has appeared an inexpressible glory and beauty in the Divine character ; an infinite fulness and preciousness in the Saviour, and a peculiar propriety and reasonableness in all his commands, promises, and threatenings. At these times, I have found my heart going out after God, longing and panting to be like him, earnestly desiring to be devoted to his work, and to die for the honour of his cause. I have found myself delighting in his Sabbaths, and in all the institutions of the Gospel ; meditating with joy upon death, and the glories of eternity, and waiting for the full manifestation of the glory which is to be revealed to all who love God.

" With regard to the subject of missions, my feelings have been somewhat peculiar. At the commencement of my second year in college, after a long season of spiritual darkness and distress, the Saviour appeared for my deliverance. It was while contemplating, with overwhelming joy, the fulness and preciousness of Christ, that the wretchedness of the heathen, who were ignorant of this Redeemer, made a serious impression upon my mind. I was much affected with the consideration of souls perishing in ignorance and sin, without even the means of salvation. I longed and prayed for them ; but could rest satisfied that the will of God should be done. My

anxiety for their salvation arose, not from the expectation of becoming a missionary, for at that time I had no such intention, but from a view of their wretchedness and misery. And uniformly as the Saviour appeared glorious, their state appeared deplorable; and my desires for the spread of the Gospel increased or diminished, as my views of Christ were more or less distinct.

"At a religious meeting soon after this, the 14th hymn of the 3d Book of Watts made a deep and pleasing impression. I did 'faint' to see Jesus, Lord of the whole earth, and all nations submitting to his delightful service. I wished for no higher honour than to be employed in his kingdom, and devoted exclusively to its interests.

"The works of Buchanan and Horne, I perused and reperused with instruction and delight. Here the inquiry arose, which has ever since been a subject of investigation and prayer; and which in the present discourse I am considering; 'is it my duty to become a missionary?' The path of duty has sometimes appeared plain and pleasant; at other times obscured by unexpected events of divine providence. During the succeeding summer, my enjoyment was uninterrupted and exquisite. It was an unfailing source of consolation that I was completely in the hands of God. I rejoiced that he would dispose of me as his glory and the good of his kingdom required; while it was the language of my heart, 'Lord, here am I,—send me.'

"Ever after I indulged a secret yet ardent desire to be a missionary. Sometimes I found myself listening to the cries of the miserable subjects of superstition, and then lisping to them the news of salvation. I enjoyed an unusual freedom in prayer for the spread of the Gospel, and made it an important subject to be employed as an instrument of good to the perishing heathen. 'O Lord, dispose of me as thy

glory may require.' No communications were read with more interest and solicitude than those relating to missions; and every token for good inspired new courage and zeal. The lives of the most distinguished missionaries, such as Brainerd, Buchanan, and the Moravians, and the fortitude, piety and faithfulness which they uniformly maintained, were instructive and profitable. From this season till the commencement of my studies in this seminary, my feelings were the same; though some things occurred which led me to doubt concerning the way wherein I ought to walk; especially the feeble state of my health, and the opinion of some to whom I made known my purpose. Unwilling, however, to come to an immediate decision, I determined to make it a subject of serious inquiry till duty might be evidently made known. The spring succeeding my admission into the seminary, it pleased God to afflict me by depriving me of my health, and by removing my dear friend, Philanthropos Perry. These providences, though they compelled me to relinquish the idea of preaching the Gospel to the heathen, increased my anxiety and love for the cause. Even while apparently drawing near to the grave, and with my eyes fixed upon the judgment, the duty of making exertions for so many immortal souls, appeared solemnly momentous. If I desired life at all, it was to preach Jesus to the heathen,—to spend and be spent for souls. My health is restored. O my Saviour, may it be to thy glory!

"In January, 1816, I commenced an examination of the subject of missions, by a course of reading relative to the duty of Christians to send the Gospel to every creature During the examination, I have frequently set apart days of fasting and prayer for the direction of the Holy Spirit, and for the purpose of humbling myself before God. These seasons have been accompanied with an increasing sense of my vileness, and an ardent desire to be exclusively de-

voted to God. My thoughts have dwelt much upon the love of Christ, upon his tenderness and care for his people, and upon the promises of the universal reign of peace and righteousness. It is pleasant to commit my case to God, and wait upon him for direction and support. I certainly have no will of my own. In the most desolate wilderness, the smiles of Jesus will comfort me, and he will protect in the greatest danger.

"As far as I can judge of my disposition, it will not prevent my undertaking a mission any more than it will prevent my entering the ministry. Still I am liable to be deceived, and to engage in a work which I cannot accomplish. In the day of adversity my strength may fail, and the cause of Christ suffer an irreparable injury. Here again, my hope is in God. I can only repeat the language of the Psalmist, 'Cause me to know the way wherein I should walk; for I lift my soul unto thee.'"

The second head of this discourse, which relates to the feelings of his friends, after considerable hesitation, I have decided to omit. Perhaps none of his writings exhibit more clearly the tenderness of his feelings, his extreme reluctance to be in any way the occasion of pain to his dearest friends, the warmth of his filial and fraternal attachments, and on the whole the loveliness of his disposition. His parents are still living; and though I have not a doubt, that what he wrote respecting them, he penned in the sincerity of his soul; yet he has spoken in terms of respect and commendation, which I am conscious their modesty would suppress. Of his brothers and sisters, he says, "our attachment has been strong and uniform. Our interests have been mutual, and our happiness uninterrupted."

On the whole, he concludes that the feelings of his friends will not prevent his engaging in an employment very dear to his heart.

Mr. Parsons' third particular, respected his health. One or two extracts will be presented, partly for the sake of showing, that though he fell an early victim to disease in a distant clime, yet in endeavouring to ascertain his duty, the state of his health was a subject of serious and candid consideration. After stating that his mind had sometimes wavered in this respect, he says :—

" My constitution, naturally slender, improves by exertion. And generally the greater my labours are, the better is my health. I am sensible that a life of inactivity would be far more dangerous, than all the toils of a missionary. Many of the missionaries have possessed a constitution more feeble than mine, who have enjoyed uninterrupted health among the heathen. Others, who had perfect health were unable to do any thing in a foreign climate.

" Little can be determined from the health of a student shut up in his room, and unaccustomed to exertion. An active life is uniformly conducive to health, and I am disposed to think that most of the complaints of professional men arise from inactivity and confinement. With regard to myself, I cannot decide positively. I see no reason, however, for neglecting this subject on account of my health. O my God, ' Cause me to know the way wherein I should walk; for I lift up my soul unto thee.'

" IV. The qualifications for a missionary life are too numerous to be particularly discussed at present. It has been a source of sorrow and pain to me, that my qualifications can so little compare with those which are indispensable to a successful missionary. My acquirements are far below what every minister should possess; but what I do possess are of such a nature as would perhaps be as favourable to a missionary life as to any other. The employment of a missionary would better suit my disposition than any other. To spend my life in inculcating the first

principles of our holy religion,—in teaching children the way of life,—in establishing schools, societies, religious meetings, and many such things, would be peculiarly pleasant and comforting. In this way I would willingly live and die. My own unpreparedness for this work calls loudly for humiliation; yet through Christ strengthening me I can do all things. I depend on his mercy to be faithful and persevering. God is my refuge and my hope. He will never leave me nor forsake me."

Extract from a letter to a relative, dated

"*Andover, March* 6, 1816.

——— "Had we every thing desirable here—were we subject to no trials and disappointments—how seldom should we faint to see the courts of our God, and long to be removed to the more perfect society of heaven! Would not the Christian meet death with much greater reluctance, and dread the period of separation from the dear objects of his delight? Should we examine more minutely the dealings of Providence, and accustom ourselves to receive all the evils as the chastisement of a most indulgent parent, our happiness would be essentially increased, and most of our sorrows would immediately disappear. We might see all things working together for our good, and for the good of Zion. In darkness we could confidently look to Jesus as our sun and our shield. In affliction, we might kiss the rod that smites us, and bear, with pleasure, those momentary troubles, which work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. In prosperity, we could never forget our dependance, but gratefully receive favours as the purchase of redeeming love.

"I have often thought of my dear aunt since I parted with her. Does she yet wander as a pilgrim on earth? However trying may be the dealings of

Providence towards her, I am sure that all things are working for her good. Her tears are not forgotten before God; her prayers will rise as a memorial of her faith and patience. Her weary head will soon rest on Jesus; her fainting heart be strengthened with the redeemed. Her trials will cease at death; every cloud will be dispelled, and Jesus will wipe away every tear. Does she not, while standing upon the threshold of this glorious existence, have a constant view of the heavenly world? To observe the consolation of a Christian, who is just completing his pilgrimage, who having passed through great tribulation, is about to have his garments made white in the blood of the Lamb, is peculiarly refreshing to all who are looking forward to the same hope. May we not say of such,

> 'Happy soul thy days are ended,
> All thy mourning days below;
> Go, by angel guards attended,
> To the sight of Jesus go.'

"The prospects of the church were never more flattering. Zion is literally rejoicing on every side. Reformations are frequent and powerful. In the city of New York, a special work of grace has commenced, which bids fair for an extensive spread. In eight or ten towns south of Boston, the Spirit has come down like a mighty rushing wind. Indeed there are revivals in many towns in all the New England states."

The spring vacation of this year, Mr. Parsons spent in Pittsfield, Vt., and the vicinity. And seldom, if ever, was the vacation of a student more faithfully and sacredly employed. In the course of it, he made one hundred and twenty-seven religious family visits, and attended thirty religious meetings in five towns. On the Sabbaths, in almost every instance, he aided the devotions of destitute churches by explaining the Scriptures. Saturday was generally de-

voted to a preparation for this service. The labours performed were in accordance with the wishes of his beloved father; but they were not less voluntary and commendable in the son. And though to some, professedly religious, it might have been more pleasant to have spent the time in rides for pleasure, in fashionable circles, or in ranging the flowery fields of elegant literature; yet without doubt, his faithfulness has been registered on high, and will be had in everlasting remembrance. How many saints were comforted, and how many sinners admonished and alarmed, cannot now be told. But in the glorious and dreadful day of account, it will appear that his labours are not in vain in the Lord. In addition to the salutary influence of his efforts in the other places which he visited, he was instrumental in promoting a special attention to religion in Bridgewater, which proved to be the commencement of an interesting and powerful revival.

It is devoutly to be hoped that young gentlemen, in similar circumstances, will be encouraged to "go and do likewise."

Extract from a letter of Mr. Parsons to his mother, written at different times in the middle of July and August 1816. He had returned to Andover about the middle of the preceding month.

"My Dear Mother,—Your request to write frequently, and to preserve an account of the exercises of my mind, I distinctly recollect. As to the frequency of writing, this long letter will be a sufficient reason why you have received no communications till now; and the journal would require an apology were it not directed to my mother.

"Set apart this day with a number of my brethren in the seminary, for private fasting and prayer, particularly to deplore the present declension of piety. As to myself, I find much occasion for repentance and

humiliation. Although I have a prevailing hope, yet much of the time I walk in darkness or slumber in stupidity. The time was when my affections were placed on things above, when I enjoyed sweet communion with God, and sat under his shadow with great delight. O how precious the memory still! I find likewise less concern for sinners. Many around me need friendly advice and serious admonition; yet seldom do I weep in secret places for their pride. That fervour, that activity of soul, which adorn the Christian, are seldom witnessed. This day I would retrace my wandering steps, I would enter the chamber where my soul first drew the vital air. O for the piety and devotion of those who are resting from their toils, and whose memory is blessed. O for the spirit of Baxter and of Brainerd—for that ardour of piety, that tenderness of soul, that deadness to the world, that concern for sinners, which were so conspicuously manifested in their daily conversation. Never, never may I cease to struggle and fight till every sin is subdued. Take from me, O my Redeemer, every thing which impedes my progress in the divine life, and bring me to thyself, the source of all consolation. Let me never grieve thy children, never bring a reproach upon thy cause.

"In the seminary, I have observed an increasing declension in spiritual religion. It is expected, and very properly, that we shall be examples of piety. Lower the standard of piety here, and you lower it abroad. The churches to whom we may break the bread of life, will be directed in a great measure by our deportment. Check the spirit of secret prayer, and this seminary might better be razed to its foundation. Does it not become us to fast and humble ourselves before God, that we perish not?

"*Monday noon.*—Spent an hour or two with a friend in a grove in conversation upon the present declension of religion. Commenced and closed the interview with prayer. Sang the 51st Psalm, and

read a part of the third chapter of the Revelation of St. John. This season has given me a clearer discovery of my past and present unfaithfulness. It was my earnest prayer that the unfaithfulness of the last vacation might not prevent the salvation of sinners. I could commend to God those precious souls which have been committed to my care. I am filled with shame. My leanness! my leanness! How much comfort I might have enjoyed, how many souls I might have directed to the Saviour, by supreme devotedness to God. Must I still live so far from duty? rather would I be banished to a wilderness,—rather would I be doomed to drag out my life in a dungeon, than to cherish an ungrateful, an impenitent heart. Chasten me, O Lord, but not in anger, lest I be like those that go down to the pit."

The vacation here mentioned was the one in which Mr. Parsons had been so eminently faithful. Respecting his sense of unfaithfulness, we can only say, that the nearer a Christian lives to God, the more conscientiously he strives to perform his whole duty, the clearer and stronger will be his conviction of his unfaithfulness and imperfection.—The people in the destitute towns, whose spiritual welfare Mr. Parsons so ardently endeavoured to promote, he considered as committed to his care.

"*Monday, July* 8.—Enjoyed a precious season with a friend this day. Was enabled to plead for more devotedness to God, for more heavenly-mindedness, more activity in the duties of the ministry. I was enabled to cast myself at his feet for mercy, and surrender my all into his hands. It is a privilege to sit at the feet of Jesus, and hear his words. For one blest hour at thy right hand, I would give all earthly joys away. My soul sometimes pants to be like Christ, to love him supremely, to be wholly devoted

to his kingdom. We sung the hymn, 'Come Holy Spirit, heavenly Dove,' with feelings corresponding in some measure with the words. We conversed much upon the present state of the college, and prayed for those *who give only a negative evidence of piety.* There are some unusual excitements in the seminary; the Lord will carry on his work.—The week past, although attended with some things unpleasant, has been a season of much spiritual enjoyment. I would look to God for protecting grace. The week now commenced, I devote to the Redeemer.

"*July* 14.—I brought my heart to Jesus; I poured out my soul before him. I confessed my helplessness and my ruin." Referring to his heart, which he pronounces 'stubborn and relentless,' he says, "here, Lord, is thy greatest enemy; I bring it to thee to be slain. Every idol I cheerfully abandon for thy blissful presence. Give me poverty, disgrace, persecution, rather than the whole world without thee. One hour of communion with God, I value more than all the world calls great and good. How great the privilege, how amazing the bliss of dwelling in the presence of him, who is worthy to receive honour and glory forever! O come Lord Jesus, come quickly.

"*July* 15.—Set apart this day as formerly. The situation of my brother L**** occupied many of my hours. O may my Saviour receive him into his kingdom of grace. Had but little enjoyment till evening, when my mind was again liberated. Never were my views of my Saviour more distinct and refreshing. I had peculiar meltings of soul, tenderness of conscience, and sweetness of temper. There was something so exalted and enrapturing in the idea, 'I shall see him as he is,' that I almost fainted. O how rich the enjoyment, 'see my Saviour as he is,' bow at his feet, hear his words, see his smiles, and sing his praise! O the delight, the honour, the privilege! O what condescension, what compassion shine in my

Saviour's face. Could I hear his voice to-night, 'come to judgment,' how welcome would be the message! Sung this verse,

> 'Blessed Jesus, what delicious fare,
> How sweet thy entertainments are;
> Never did angels taste above
> Redeeming grace and dying love.'

At a late hour retired to rest, and reluctantly fell asleep, repeating these words, 'How can I sleep while angels sing.' For this season, I bless my Saviour. It was all of him. I never felt more unworthy. Is not this, my mother, a part of heaven? Soon I hope to see this Jesus with you, and with united voice to cry, 'worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive glory, and honour, and majesty, and power forever.' Amen.

"*Monday, July* 21.—Last evening enjoyed peculiar nearness to God in prayer for a revival of religion. The Sabbath was a profitable day, although I suffered much from a worldly mind, and wandering thoughts. Spent the evening in a prayer-meeting just established, one which we hope will be of everlasting importance to precious souls. This day have had some freedom in religious duties, and some desires for the descent of the Holy Spirit. May we not hope that the day has dawned, and that the Sun of Righteousness is rising to refresh the Church? O how I long to break the bonds which bind me here! Come, that wished-for day, when I may distribute the bread of life to the destitute and the perishing. Where is my destined land? In the East? Welcome the day that wafts me to those poor heathen. Or am I called to the west? There may I live and die a faithful servant of my Divine Master. Or is Vermont my field of labour? I would cheerfully resign all for a work so noble and dignified. I would not lift my hand to choose my future portion. Where Jesus sends me, I would willingly go. I have of late

had an unconquerable ardour for usefulness to the souls of men. If my blessed Saviour should give me the honour of saving sinners, the largest desire of my heart would be granted; but without this privilege, I should be unhappy even with the world at my command. O to be a humble, active, faithful and successful minister of Christ! How great the happiness, how exalted the station! My soul is on fire, while I think of it. I must now, my mother, bid you adieu for the present. May Jesus dwell with you, walk with you, commune, and give you that peace which passeth all understanding.

"*August* 7.—I have been obliged, my dear mother, to omit writing till this late period, by reason of ill health. I have been led to think that my work upon earth would soon be finished, and my employment for eternity commence. But my health is unexpectedly restored, and my hopes of a life of activity in the service of Christ much revived. My health has not been so feeble as last summer, but I did fear the return of the same complaints, which must have occasioned serious injury to my constitution. Health never appeared more precious and more desirable. The idea of doing good to the souls of men makes me look upon an early grave with a degree of melancholy although not with alarm.

"Of all my enjoyments, that which I derive from the sovereignty of God affords the most permanent satisfaction. He gave me my existence, my talents, my privileges, and all my earthly blessings, and he knows in what way they will promote his glory, and advance his kingdom. To him I yield my all. 'Father, not my will, but thine be done.' What sentiment but this can give serenity of mind in the midst of trials? God is all, and in all. He directs the pulse of my life with as much exactness as he directs the course of the sun. May we not rest assured that we shall die at that very moment which is best for us and for the church? This gives a smile to the

grave. Jesus makes the dying bed; Jesus hides the feeble body in the grave; Jesus walks with the humble believer through the gloomy vale, and opens the gates of everlasting peace. O who would not die for such a Saviour; die to live,—die to sin no more,—die to see God as he is, and be like him. How animating the thought! My heart often leads me from the Saviour to the trifling objects of sense. When, O when will the struggle cease, and 'my unwearied feet arrive where perfect pleasure is?'"

Journal—"*August* 14, 1816.—'Search me, O God, and try my ways.' I am unable of myself to discover my own vileness. I know not how many times every day I offend my Saviour, and grieve his Holy Spirit. I know not how ungrateful I have been for favours, how unhumbled in afflictions, how neglectful of the word of God, how unconcerned for his glory, and the salvation of my fellow-sinners. I know not the extent of my pride, my ambition, my worldly-mindedness. I know not the criminality of my unfaithfulness, and the dishonour I have reflected upon the cause of Christ. O Lord, thou whose eyes penetrate the deepest recesses of the heart, wilt thou search me and let me know enough of my heart to lie in the dust before thee all my days; and when I am placed where I ought to be, wilt thou give me grace to remain there, and thy Spirit to comfort and direct me; and let me always rest my soul on thy arms of love. I particularly request these favours with a view to my future labours for the church. To be a humble, zealous, and faithful minister, how much grace is needed; how much wisdom, gentleness, tenderness of soul, and devotedness to God! How much ardour, patience, perseverance, and self-denial! How much I need the Holy Ghost to guide, uphold, defend, and strengthen me! In view of my weakness and ignorance, I desire to prostrate myself before God, and by prayer and fasting to make my requests known to

him. O to come near his seat; I would order my speech before him; I would fill my mouth with arguments. I would plead his glory, the honour of his name, and the advancement of his kingdom. I would mention before him the extreme coldness and slothfulness of his professed children, the contempt which is cast upon his Sabbaths and ordinances, the strength and success of his enemies, and the flood of iniquity which has come in upon us. I would plead for a perishing world, for his chosen people, that he would take the work into his own hand, make bare his arm for their deliverance, beautify his church, enlarge her borders, and strengthen her stakes; give his ministers more grace and zeal, and put his enemies to confusion. I plead for myself, that I may be a humble instrument of making his glory known to a perishing world, of comforting his children, of enlarging his kingdom, and of stopping the progress of vice and infidelity. All my desires beside are faint compared with this.

Journal—"*Semi-annual Fast*, *August* 15.—Rose this morning with feeble health, and with a confused state of mind. The infliction of the slightest pain, the disorder of any part of the system, destroys the natural vigour of body and mind. How cheering the prospect of an eternal redemption from pain and sickness, and of the possession of immortal vigour in the delightful employment of Heaven.

"In view of the distinguished favours, temporal and spiritual, conferred upon this seminary, and the scantiness of our returns, we should be humble and penitent; and in view of the interesting relation which it sustains to the church in present and future ages, we should be mighty in prayer for its purity and prosperity. O may our prayers this day obtain the blessing.

"In view of the responsibility of our station, we (members of a secret praying circle) propose to devise in what way we can afford assistance to the

cause of Christ, and encourage by our prayers and exertions all plans for this design. For the ensuing week we propose to converse more intimately and seriously with some of our brethren, and endeavour to excite that social and devout disposition, which is the foundation of future usefulness.

"What can I do this *day* for God? Can I not comfort some of his children? Can I not advance a step toward Heaven; break some cord of sin, obtain some divine light?

"*August* 17, 1816, *Lord's Day.*—Suffered much from this feeble body. O when I shall have worn it out in my Redeemer's service, it will be pleasant to leave it in the dust, till it shall rise with immortal vigour.

"The word of God (this day) was sweet and refreshing. The God-exalting and soul-humbling doctrines of the gospel are a feast to an immortal mind.

"The joy which is now perfected in the breast of Paul, commenced while his tabernacle was in the flesh. His determination, while on earth, to glory in nothing, save the cross of Christ, leads him to glory in nothing but Christ in heaven.

"Sensible of the indispensable importance of a deep, thorough, and practical acquaintance with the Word of God, I desire to keep my eye more steadily fixed upon this object, and to use every help, whether of commentaries, observation, or conversation, for that strength and direction in Divine truth which may be for the edifying of the church.

"*August* 28, 1816.—In connection with brother W*****, this day is to be devoted to fasting and prayer for the directions of the Holy Spirit in our future employment. If it be the will of God that we should go to the heathen, we desire to know it. If we are destined for domestic missionaries, or for stated ministers, we would know the way in which we must walk. Upon a subject of such moment we think it proper to fast often, and pray without ceasing. Within

us there is much darkness; we come to him, in whom there is no darkness at all. We come to the great Head of the Church, and give up ourselves without the least reserve to his cause, to be directed by his Spirit, and supported by his grace. We fling ourselves at his feet, to be sent any where, or to do any thing, which he directs. We hold our Saviour dearer than all beside; every earthly favour is relinquished, if in competition with his glory.

"Why should I not be a settled minister? Not because there are enough to supply the churches; but because there are more than there are missionaries, in proportion to the calls of Providence. Upon this question, after much reflection, and I trust humble prayer, I have a good degree of satisfaction. I think it not my duty to accept of any permanent situation, but to devote myself to the missionary cause. This conclusion, I think safe and satisfying. O thou, whose I am, if this be not thy will, make me sensible of it, and turn me to thee by thy good Spirit.

"*Sabbath, September* 2.—Refreshed this afternoon with the exhibition of the character of Christ. He is all my hope. I would bear all reproach for him, and devote my whole life to his service. I would preach him *constantly, faithfully.* It is my supreme desire to make my Saviour known to sinners.

"*September* 4.—In what way can I best glorify my Saviour as a missionary? To answer this question aright, it is my duty and delight to bow the knee to God in secret and earnest prayer, to converse much with my Saviour, and to humble myself in the dust before him. This day I would pray and fast, and commit my all to his gracious disposal. O to see Jesus with the eye of faith; to behold his glory, to rely upon his promises; to trust his grace. What a blessed privilege to converse with the great Head of the Church, to devote myself repeatedly to him; From him I expect all my comfort, all my success. He is the Captain under whom I would fight, and

for whom I would die. O to come near him! I would plead for the honour of making him known to a dying world.

"*September* 13.—A criminal want of reflection, a delusive fondness for earthly splendour, sear the conscience of the Christian, and set him at rest in worldly security. Were we more familiar with death, did we contemplate more frequently the dreadful, pleasing events of the judgment, our Christian graces would be of a more rapid growth, and of a sweeter fragrance. How often are the glories of Christ concealed from the eye of my mind, and the interests of his kingdom strangely forgotten! How often is my heart frozen with sin, and my affections benumbed with spiritual sloth! Does this become an expectant of glory, a servant of Jesus? Shall I, with such a mind, approach the table of my dying Lord the following Sabbath? O may the Holy Spirit prepare for me an acceptable sacrifice. This day I will fast and mourn for my sins, and plead for a blessing. I desire to remove every obstacle in the way of my Divine Saviour, and may he at that interesting season impart to my famishing soul the bread of life. May he lift upon me the light of his countenance, and make me that happy man 'whose iniquities are forgiven, whose transgressions are covered.'"

In a letter to a relative dated Andover, August 22, referring to an unpropitious event in the history of American missions, he says: "It may damp the zeal of missions, but it will ultimately promote the cause. The heathen will be converted, and missionaries will go into every country, and evangalise every nation. What good plan ever succeeded without opposition? And does not God, to try the faith of his children, frequently throw obstacles in the way of those plans which he designs to be executed. If we wish for domestic missionaries, we must have foreign ones."

Extract from another letter to the same friend, dated "*Andover, September* 23.

"Strike out the idea of future rest, and how wretched would be our existence! Tell the aged saint that 'death is an eternal sleep,'—that his expectations of future happiness are vain, and what would be his feelings? 'And is there no Saviour, no heaven, no rest to my weary soul. Must I die, and never rise? Sleep and be forgotten? But thanks be unto God, I have no such fears. Jesus lives, and I shall live also. Come death, I fear thee not. Jesus, my hope, has the keys of death and hell. On the arm of everlasting love I rest, and wait and long to wing myself away to everlasting bliss.' Is not this the consolation of my dear aunt? Does she not wait the summons of death with a tranquil mind, beholding her Saviour there cheering the way with heavenly smiles?" Having spoken of his aged and respected aunt, the writer addressed a short paragraph to her. "My dear aunt, I almost envy your situation; soon to 'languish into life,' to leave a sinful world, a wicked heart, a feeble body, for a Saviour's smiles, a glorious body, a crown which fadeth not away. Have courage then, for your warfare will soon be over, your victory won, and your reward an hundred fold. I cease not to pray for you, although, with repentance and humility I say it, not with the ardour, which becometh a child of God. May 'the peace of God, which passeth all understanding,' continue to rest upon you, and eventually make your advent into heaven, both joyful and triumphant.

"You ask, my dear cousin, where I expect to spend my life? It is uncertain. I have devoted myself to the work of a Christian missionary; and as such I expect to be under the direction of my superiors. I may not be sent to the heathen, but my life, God willing, will be spent in promoting the cause of missions. The cause is great, and the responsibility too great for an angel to sustain. I need your prayers; I trust

I have them. Weak as I am, in Christ I am strong. I will glory in nothing saving his cross.

"You inquire of Middlebury attachments; none exist—nor in any other place. It is a subject which I have purposely neglected, till I knew what the Lord would have me to do."

Journal, *September* 22, 1816.—Was much refreshed this day by the preaching of God's word. The manner was peculiarly ardent. There were striking exhibitions of a humble, ardent, and devotional soul. Every one knew that the preacher had been with Jesus, and received his message from God. Such preaching makes me sick of myself,—gives me repentance for my past coldness and slothfulness, and an ardent longing for deeper humility, for more intimate discoveries of my Saviour. O that I had in the wilderness a lodging-place, I would leave the world, and weep, and fast, and pray. O my Saviour, sink me low before thee, make me ashamed of my vileness, my strong attachments to the world, my feeble desires for thy glory. I plead for thy grace; and for a heart which shall delight supremely in thy service; and be willing to bear all suffering for thy sake. O to rise above the world and sin; to consider myself as a stranger and pilgrim below; and to press forward with continual alacrity in the work of the Gospel!

"I do now humbly request the Divine presence during the approaching vacation; and I lift my soul to my Saviour, that he would smile upon every attempt to glorify him, and give me souls snatched from devouring fire. That I may not grieve the Holy Spirit, and neglect opportunities to do good, I would, relying upon his grace, propose the following things as worthy of observation. Let conversation on the journey be spiritual, by no means trifling; let every call be improved for God; pray three or four times every day; read the Scriptures often;

lift the heart to God while on the way; plead for deliverance from temptation; for grace to be faithful. During the season spent in Pittsfield, spend much time in secret prayer, much in fasting, much in heavenly conversation. Comfort God's children, alarm the wicked and direct them to Christ. Always be humble,—mindful of my responsibility,—of the worth of souls,—of the shortness of time, and of the solemnity of eternity. Be grave, yet cheerful; meek, yet bold for God; submissive, yet longing and struggling for the descent of the Holy Spirit; and may this vacation be reviewed at the judgment, with joy to myself and to many souls, who are now in the way to ruin. Blessed Saviour, I lean on thy arm, I fall at thy feet. For thy name's sake, 'pardon my iniquity, for it is great.' Amen."

Very soon after his return to Andover, he wrote to his brother the following letter:—

"*Andover*, *November* 20, 1816.

"My Dear Brother,—I arrived at this seminary in good health on Friday noon. The journey was pleasant, though unexpectedly protracted by reason of the badness of the roads. My situation here, as I anticipated, is accompanied with a profusion of temporal and spiritual blessings, which demand a peculiar tribute of gratitude and praise. My room-mate, of whom you have often heard me speak, is a generous friend, a tender companion, and, I trust, an humble Christian. My health has certainly improved by my recent tour among the Green Mountains. Should it continue, I would not be unmindful of so distinguished a favour. But the events of the succeeding year may occasion many tears, many sighs.

"With all the enjoyment of the present, I can never forget the past. My thoughts will run home, and I am not solicitous to check them. Many of the

little occurrences of the past vacation, which at the time scarcely left an impression upon my memory, now afford me much amusement and instruction. I remember the domestic circle, the social visits, the cheerful walks. I remember also a father's solicitude, a mother's tenderness, a brother's kindness, and a sister's love. Of this one reward you may rest assured, that of a thankful heart; as for any other, I can only say, that it is better not to vow, than to vow and not pay.

"My long, and perhaps criminal silence upon religious subjects, seems to require me not to be silent now. No event would afford more joy than that of your reception of the truth, as it is in Jesus, and no one be more interesting to saints and angels. Should you become savingly interested in the gospel, all is yours. Conscience would whisper peace, afflictions would be sweet, life desirable, death triumphant, judgment joyful, and eternity blessed. Think of all the virtuous and pious as your companions; of a friend in sickness, in distress, in death; of a crown of glory, robes of resplended white, palms of victory; and more, of a resemblance to the adorable Jesus. Dear brother, the decisive moment is at hand. Soon there will be a *farewell* to calls, to entreaties, and, if impenitent, to heaven.

"I shall never forget you in my prayers, while I have a heart of life to pray, At present, I must say *adieu*. May we meet to part no more."

In the foregoing letter, the writer addressed a paragraph to his youngest sister, then about twelve years of age. The reader will perceive that the style of it is different from that in which he generally wrote. But as his object was to benefit her soul, he wrote in a manner best adapted to that purpose.

"Sister Electa,—Your brother Levi still remem-

bers you. Your health is feeble, but I hope it will recover. But, Electa, we were all born to die. Should I live a few years, I shall hear that my sister Electa is in the grave. We both must die soon. But shall we both live in heaven? Are you a friend to the blessed Jesus? Do you pray? Do you love to think about God? Love to converse about heaven? I hope to go there when I die. And, Electa, you may go there too. Jesus invites you. If you are sorry for your sins, and love God, you will go there. Your brother Levi will always pray for you."

From the notices in his journal at this time, it appears that the writer had for a short time been walking in darkness. Perhaps this very darkness, this spiritual mourning, was kindly ordered for the purpose of producing deeper humility, and a more child-like and affectionate submission to the Divine will, and thus of preparing him for an affliction, more severe than any which he had hitherto been called to experience. What follows will explain this observation.

Andover, December 24, 1816.

"Dear Parents,—Your letter just received, containing information relative to sister Electa's illness, was truly affecting. When I parted with her, it was with deep solicitude. I observed that when she stood at the window to see me as long as she could, there were evident indications of approaching ill-health. I thought much of her afterwards, and your letter has assured me that my anxiety was not without reason. I tremble for the result. What will your letter next contain; but I recollect your advice, to bow with submission to the will of our heavenly Parent. God will do right. Though 'clouds and darkness are round about him, justice and judgment are the habitation of his throne.' I cannot be sufficiently thankful that my parents have Divine support in this sea-

son of affliction. It is the peculiar excellence of our religion, that it gives consolation when it is most needed.

"When I read that sister Electa was pleading for mercy, my feelings were indescribable. May the Lord give us faith to commend her to mercy. May we not go and tell Jesus, plead his atoning sacrifice, his unfailing promises? I have returned from a little praying circle, composed of my intimate friends, where the situation of my dear sister has been frequently mentioned at the throne of grace. Will not the Lord hear, and cause this sickness to be for his glory? My parents have been commended to a merciful Saviour, 'who does not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men.' Will not the Son of God walk with you in this furnace of affliction? How pleasing would it be to be present with you and to mingle my tears with yours. How comforting to walk with Electa down to the vale of death, to direct her to the Saviour, 'who taketh away the sins of the world.' I would tell her that Jesus will walk with those who trust in him, and suffer no evil to befall them. Tell her, if she be yet a subject of prayer, and be able to receive a brother's love, tell her that I am with her in spirit by night and by day. I long to see her, and above all, to hear of her joy in Christ. Will she not leave a word for one who longs and prays for her?

"I leave the event. I trust God will prepare me for every affliction, and make every trial 'work out a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.' And may my dear mother say, 'the will of God be done. I will be still and know that the Lord reigns. Father, into thy hands I commend myself and the dear child whom thou hast given me.'"

Extract from a letter to his eldest brother, of the same date.

"Is she still verging to the grave? Let us eye the hand of God, and hear his voice, which is so solemnly speaking to us. Let not our sorrows keep us from leaning on the arm of Almighty strength. May the Lord Jesus be your friend and your hope. May you 'run into the name of the Lord, as a strong tower, into which the righteous run and are safe.'

"May your family be favoured of the Lord. May he regard with parental tenderness all our sorrows, and cause us through great tribulation to enter into his kingdom."

The day after Mr. Parsons received the intelligence of his sister's sickness, another letter arrived, to which the following is an answer.

Andover, December 26, 1816.

"The will of God is done. That lovely flower has withered away. My sister Electa sleeps in the grave; her spirit has returned to God who gave it. *But I will be still.* I will not suffer a murmuring word to escape me. I will bow with submission, and kiss the rod which smites me, for I see the hand of a friend in all this. I see Jesus, the compassionate Saviour, chastising in love, removing an earthly comfort on purpose to give us himself, and all the joy his presence and smiles can afford. He will walk with me in this furnace, and permit me to receive no injury.

"My dear parents,—Your second letter arrived about twenty-four hours after the first. I was sitting in my study, and conversing with my room-mate upon the painful subject, when the letter was put into my hand. I opened it in haste, and perceived by a few of the first sentences, the affecting intelligence which followed. I laid the letter aside for a few moments; endeavoured to compose my mind, and not sink under the stroke. My room-mate kneeled by

my side, commended me to a merciful Saviour, and fervently implored the comforts of his grace. From this time till I retired, my mind was composed, though not without the greatest struggle. I slept well; in the morning was more refreshed than I expected. My brethren wept with me, and prayed for me. My appetite was remarkably preserved. To-day my soul seems stayed upon God. Everlasting arms are underneath me. The Saviour has embraced me in the arms of his love, wiped the tears from my eyes, and healed my bleeding heart.

'When overwhelm'd with grief,
To heaven I lift my eyes.'

"This affliction, I believe, will be for my good—make me more humble, more watchful, more faithful more heavenly-minded. This is my heart's desire and prayer to God. It has been my constant inquiry, for what purpose this affliction was designed. Is it not some kind messenger, to admonish us of our pilgrimage, and of our home?

"It now remains for me to do all in my power to comfort you under this severe affliction. It would have been pleasant to have attended you through the whole trial; but it was not best. You have had one with you more precious than children, even him who walked with the three children in the fiery furnace; who wept at the grave of Lazarus, and who has said, 'lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the world.' He is not angry, but full of compassion. Even as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him.' Have we not mercies mingled with judgments? Our dear Electa was a child of prayer, she was in infancy given to the Lord; she had the instruction of pious tender parents. She lived, while sick, till many prayers had been made for her, and till, we hope, she prayed for herself, and then fell asleep in Jesus. I have reason to be thankful that I saw and conversed with her last vacation—

that she read the Bible by course the last year—that she read many religious tracts, and that it was in my heart to pray for her more than usual since I left home. But I leave the event with God. My dear mother, you cannot tell how much my father's letter comforted me. You are divinely supported. Your refuge is in God. Dwell not much upon this affliction, but let your eyes be to the Lord. Your pilgrimage will soon be over. A few more waves of trouble will waft you to eternal rest. There you will have no more trials, there you will sigh no more. Let us gird up the loins of our minds, and run with more speed the heavenly race. While we live on earth, let us breathe in heaven. O the rest that weary pilgrims find in Christ! The language of this Providence is, 'arise and follow me.' I doubt not but you will live to see the happy fruit of this affliction. May we not hope, that it will be sanctified to my dear brother I——. For this I will often bend my knees at the throne of grace. Perhaps Electa was taken from trouble to peace, from a mother's arms to the bosom of Jesus.

"Remember me to those who were with you in this trial, and who prayed often for Electa. May the Lord reward them an hundred fold."

To his eldest brother, in a letter of the same date, he writes thus:—

"Dear Brother,—I thank you for your affectionate letter. God has supported me, and I trust will support you. The affliction is sore; the wound is deep. Electa was dear to us both. You ask me to pray that this affliction may be sanctified to you.—Yes, my dear brother, I shall; I cannot forget you. I do hope the death of Electa will be life to your soul. How much shall we need a Saviour on a dying bed! O let us seek him now! Will you not give yourself to him this day. Should this event pass un-

improved, perhaps God will speak no more. The day of hope may be closed, and ruin certain. I now commend you to God, praying always for you, that you may be a comfort to your afflicted parents, an honour to the church, an heir of glory."

In his journal I find the following reflections, penned one day earlier than the two last letters:—

"On the 17th instant my dear sister Electa breathed her last, and rests now, I would humbly hope, in the arms of her Saviour. She was a lovely sister, a peculiar comfort to us; but not too good to die. This furnace is exceeding hot. It now becomes me to inquire why the Lord hath afflicted me? Had I not my affections too much upon the creature? Did I not loiter in my spiritual race, and forget the injunctions of my Saviour, 'watch and pray?' Have I not been unfaithful to my friends, unfaithful to myself, unfaithful to sinners? Have I not been negligent in the duties of the closet, in maintaining a humble walk with God? In these and many other ways I have offended, and come short of the glory of God. I deserve his chastising rod. I will submissively sit at his feet and bear his indignation, because I have sinned. I will remember my backslidings, and return unto God. I will gird up the loins of my mind, and run with alacrity the race before me, looking diligently to Jesus, my guide and my hope. I will be more humble, more devoted to God, more faithful in his service. I will consider that this is not my abiding place, that I am only a stranger and a foreigner, as all my fathers were. I will converse more with God in secret, and with Christian friends; be more intimate with the Scriptures, more devotional upon the Sabbath, more diligent in business, more circumspect before the world. I will strive to be holy, harmless, undefiled; and to make all with whom I may associate like our divine Saviour. I will seek

opportunities to do good, to comfort the afflicted, to reclaim the wandering, to alarm the sinner. I will be tender and dutiful to my parents, and make every exertion for their comfort while God shall continue them in life. I will bind up their broken hearts, wipe the tear from their eyes, and point them to the 'rest which remaineth for the people of God.' I will be more faithful to my brothers; to pray for them, converse with them, and to lead them to the Saviour of lost sinners. It shall be my desire to live as seeing him who is invisible, with a constant view of death and my accountability; that when summoned to leave the world, I may rejoice in the blessed assurance of an inheritance with the redeemed, reserved in heaven for all who love the appearing of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

"I make these resolutions, I trust, with a humble conviction, that it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps; that all my strength is weakness, and all self-confidence vain and criminal. I come to thee, heavenly Father, for grace, for wisdom and strength. O let me be thine wholly and forever. Let me be humble in prosperity, submissive in adversity, and faithful in duty. May this sore affliction bring forth the peaceable fruits of righteousness to those who are exercised thereby. May my dear parents be supported of God; my dear brothers be brought to the knowledge of truth as it is in Jesus; and may we all come out of this furnace as gold seven times purified, and sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

"That the recent affliction may be sanctified to us all, especially to my dear brothers, and that I may be directed this year in the way of my duty, I propose to keep this as a day of fasting and prayer.

"*Evening.*—God will direct me in duty, and uphold me by his Spirit. I would be altogether devoted to his service, and cheerfully submit to all the dispensations of his providence. I feel myself infinitely vile and helpless. I can go no where but to my

heavenly Father. I fall at his feet. Could I feel suitably under this affliction, love God more, and sin less, I would say, 'it is good for me to be afflicted.' My soul lies humbled in the dust. 'As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God.' When shall I be like him?"

The reader has already perceived that the death of his beloved sister was to Mr. Parsons a grievous stroke. It was a theme, however painful, on which he long dwelt with a kind of melancholy pleasure, in his closet and in his communications to his friends. "Like the music of Carril it was pleasant, but mournful to the soul." Persons not particularly interested in the event, may think that it has been sufficiently considered. I cannot, however, persuade myself to omit another letter on this subject; and I presume that no one having read it, would wish it omitted. It was directed to his only surviving sister and myself.

Andover, January 10, 1817.

"My Dear Brother and Sister,—How do you sustain this sore chastisement of our heavenly Father? When it was announced that our dear sister Electa was no more, did you not yield to weeping and sorrow, and refuse to be comforted because she was not? And have you not since then found your converse with God more sweet, your attachments to the world less strong, and your desires for unreserved devotedness to the Divine will more ardent and more successful?

"You have, without doubt, been impatient to hear from me since this affliction. To tell you that it was unexpected and severe, that it produced hours of weeping, that it excited many painful reflections, would be to tell you what you already know. To yield the fond expectation of ever seeing her again on earth, to relinquish those tender hopes and affections which were excited by her pleasant conversation,

her generous and affectionate disposition, has caused me many struggles. Still I can say, it is not in my heart to complain. God has done it. This is all I wish. 'My soul doth magnify the Lord.' Who is there in heaven but God? Whom should I desire on earth but God? To whom can I commit my friends but to God? To what should I more cheerfully submit than to his sovereign disposal? Who can do better than God? Who knows better what comforts to give, and when to take them away? Let man govern the world, and would our interests be more safe, and our path less dreary? Who but God can give exercise to faith, love, and hope, those graces so necessary in affliction? O think how tender he is of all his children! wipes away every tear, hears their groans, and counts their sorrows! He is full of compassion, abundant in goodness, and rich in mercy. Did any one ever cry to him and not be heard? Did any one ever commit his soul to him and still be unsafe? Think again, 'He does not afflict willingly.' His children are in great tribulation, but it is on their way to glory. They are deprived of earthly comforts, but to give that peace which passeth knowledge. Friends are removed for a friend who never faileth; they are cast into the furnace to walk with Jesus; life is bitter that eternity may be sweet. Shall we fear to walk where our Saviour leads us? Is not heaven worth enough to suffer a little for it? The crown of glory to wear a crown of thorns for it? Is it not better to be without our friends than without our God? To be in a dungeon, at the stake, or in the flames, rather than to part with heaven? O pleasing reflections, joyful anticipations! Soon we are at rest. A few more waves of trouble will waft us home; pilgrims a little longer, then fellow-citizens with the saints and household of God in glory.

'How can we sink with such a prop
As our Almighty God?'

"Do you not, my dear sister, find support in Jesus? Let us not grieve too much, but quicken our steps to heaven. Let us be more watchful, more faithful to our surviving friends. O may you rest your weary head on Jesus and enjoy his smiles. Let us no longer forget our Father's house. I commend you, dear sister, to God; and what can I do more? For the present, farewell. May the Lord be your God, your eternal portion."

"*March*, 1817, *Fast day.*—'The sacrifices of God are a broken heart.' That fast is acceptable to him, which humbles the heart, and produces sincere repentance. Shall this be such a fast? Is there not a special call for humiliation? What is the decision of conscience? Have the duties of the closet been faithfully discharged? Or have I been satisfied with the service of the lips? Have I held communion with God, and obtained the unction of the Holy Spirit? Have I been watchful over my unholy affections, over the allurements of the world and the vain desires of the flesh? Have my words been such as become the gospel? Have I cherished and matured all the Christian graces? Have I uniformly exercised supreme love to God, supreme attachment to the interests of his kingdom, ardent desires to be conformed to him, and bitter repentance and humiliation for sin? Has it been the design of all my studies, my conversation, visits, and prayers, to advance in grace, and to promote the interests of Zion? Have I discharged all my relative duties in this seminary? Have I been sufficiently fervent in my prayers for my friends, for the church and the world? These are questions which this day should be examined; and conscious of a criminal deficiency in all these duties, I would by prayer and fasting implore forgiveness."

I shall here present extracts from three letters to a relative in Conway, Massachusetts. It will be

perceived by the dates that the two first are not inserted in chronological order. For this arrangement there are special reasons.

"*Andover, May* 1, 1815.

"My Dear Cousin,—I regretted exceedingly when I visited my friends last, that I was obliged to return without calling at Conway. I have no friends with whom I could have spent my time more profitably, and no visit would have been more pleasant. But duty evidently required that I should relinquish many of my intended visits. Separated as I now am from your society, with but little expectation of seeing you again in the flesh, I bear you in prayerful remembrance at the throne of grace; humbly hoping that the Christian's God will be your Protector and Redeemer.

"When I saw you last, the solemn and interesting subjects of death and eternity made deep impressions upon your mind; impressions, which I trust will be permanent and end in the salvation of your soul. Religion appeared to you of the first importance, as embracing all real happiness in this world, and in that which is to come. Such being the feelings of your mind, I have often desired to guide you to Christ. Have you found that all worldly enjoyments are unstable and unsatisfactory, that they cannot give peace to a guilty conscience nor remove the slavish fear of death? Have you found that all the sources of expected pleasure in the circle of friends, in amusements, bring pain and disappointment? Has not conscience, in the silent watches of the night, tortured you with painful reflections of increasing guilt, and filled you with fearful apprehensions of the justice of God?

"Borne down under the weight of sorrow, you may with the greatest propriety enquire, 'is there no remedy?' 'Christians, lead me to that enjoyment, which will calm the tumults of my mind, support me under every trial, and take away the sting of death.' Yes, my dear cousin, we can direct you to such en-

joyment; and this enjoyment is in God. To those who have obtained it, conscience whispers peace, death smiles, the grave is pleasant. They drink at that fountain which is never dry; partake of pleasures which satisfy the soul. They have comfort in affliction, triumph in death, and glory forever. Do you ask, 'how this happiness can be obtained?' I answer, it is freely offered. The proclamation of the gospel is, 'Ho every one that thirsteth, come to the waters, and he that hath no money: come ye, buy and eat, yea come buy wine and milk without money and without price.' Although thousands have repaired to this fountain, it is yet full. In it, the penitent thief on the cross was purified in his dying moments. Sinners, in every age, have the same blessing by looking to the same Redeemer; and believe me, there is hope for you. Look for a moment to Calvary; those drops of blood can cleanse a world. If you have not yet the joys of believing, let me, in view of eternity, and impressed with the worth of the soul, entreat you to delay no longer. Your eternal *all* is suspended here.

"When heaven is offered, can we refuse? When we are invited to take gold tried in the fire, shall we remain poor and miserable? No, my cousin, while you are reading these lines, resolve to make religion your principal concern, and secure in season the reward of the righteous. I hope that this may be your happy situation, and that eternity may be yours to praise the Lord.

"Remember me most affectionately to my uncle and aunt. I know that aunt is usually ill. I trust, however, that she finds it good to bear her Father's rod. Her course to glory is sure, although attended with pains and sufferings. When Jehovah says, 'I am thy shield and thine exceeding great reward,' our hope is strong, our faith sure."

"*Andover, July* 10, 1815.

"My Dear Cousin,—The present unexpected

opportunity of conveying a letter to you, I am unwilling to pass unnoticed. Your letter containing the affecting, pleasing relation of the work of the Holy Spirit in your family, and in town, was received in due season, and read with emotions not easily described. It was put into my hands on the evening I returned from Vermont; and the perusal removed that unpleasant state of mind, which journeying, fatigue, and the world, had occasioned. I rejoice that the long wished-for and the long prayed-for season has arrived, when salvation has come to your house. You are not insensible, I presume, of the richness of this favour, nor of the obligations it imposes of supreme devotedness to the merciful Giver. I think I hear you say, 'what shall I render unto the Lord for his mercies? Bless the Lord, O my soul. Praise him in his sanctuary; praise him in the firmament of his power; praise according to his excellent greatness.'

"The feelings of your dear mother upon the present occasion, I can easily imagine. How long has she prayed, and wept, and hoped, for the work you now witness? Does she not say, 'the night is far spent, the day dawns, the day-spring from on high has risen in our hearts. My soul doth magnify the Lord; my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour. Now let thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.' Such joy have those who wait upon God. The afflictions which they may be called to indure are momentary, and will issue in joy and peace. So it will be when life, like the vision of the night, shall pass away. The waiting soul then breaks its prison and its chains to enjoy the liberty of the sons of God. Its warfare closes, its battles are won, its victory obtained. Sorrow and pain are no more; tears and sighs are gone, and every thing in prospect which can interest and delight.

"Do you, my cousin, anticipate a day so glorious,

a crown so precious? Do you hope soon to leave a world of sin for a world of light and purity. This tenement of clay for a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens! 'The thoughts of such amazing bliss, should constant joys create.'

"You will find it of essential importance to walk frequently from earth to heaven. Contemplate frequently the glory of Christ and the perfection of his kingdom. Should you be in darkness, repair constantly to him in whom 'there is no darkness at all.' Have you fears of death, commit yourself to him who hath the keys of death and hell. Are you distressed for those who have no interest at the throne of grace? Plead for them, as Abraham did for devoted Sodom; and when you have done all, adopt the language of submission, 'not my will, but thine be done.'

"In many places God is appearing with power for the advancement of his kingdom. We have every reason to believe that the glorious period of righteousness and peace is rapidly approaching. Never were greater exertions for the diffusion of the gospel of Jesus, and never were the exertions crowned with greater success. The darkness of Paganism is retiring, and the Sun of Righteousness is rising to enlighten the whole earth. Soon there will be 'neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free, male nor female, but all one in Christ Jesus.'"

Andover, April 25, 1817.

"My Dear Cousin,—Whether your truly welcome letter of the 23d of September has been answered, I have indeed forgotten. Ill health at the time, together with severe affliction, prevented my writing so frequently as I desired.

"Notwithstanding this long absence, I have never forgotten you, or your parents and friends. I long to visit you, and enjoy again the satisfaction of mutual conversation upon heavenly things. Is the voice of health still heard in your dwelling? Or what is

more desirable, does the Lord lift upon you the light of his countenance? I trust you have advanced far in a life of godliness; have crucified the world and its affections, and mantained a humble faithful walk with God. No greater honour was ever conferred upon man, than that which was conferred upon Enoch. 'He walked with God; and he had this testimony, that he pleased God.' And could the same be said of us, we should indeed rest with the blessed.

"No doubt you experience many trials in a religious course which you never anticipated. We are taught that 'they who will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.' What matter, if in our way to heaven we meet with here and there a thorn? Are the present afflictions worthy to be compared with the glory which is to be revealed? Who would not for a crown of glory wear a crown of thorns? Who would not bear his cross for the privilege of following Christ? O my cousin, when shall we rise above this world and live as seeing God? When shall we exchange these hearts of stone for hearts of flesh? Hasten that day when our eyes shall no more run down with tears; when our hearts shall no longer swell with sorrow; when we shall sit down in heaven and drink of those rivers of pleasure which flow from the throne of God.

"Since writing the above, letters have been received from the missionaries, giving a most animating account of the state of the mission at Bombay. Messrs. Newell and Hall preach the gospel to the heathen almost every day, and we trust not in vain. They have under their care two hundred children, whom they are instructing in the things of the kingdom of God. They beheld an instance of self-torture which was truly affecting. A woman, in consequence of a vow made to her gods, consented to have two large iron hooks thrust through the flesh on her back, and by them to be suspended in the air, and swung about like a garment hung in the wind. This to

please her gods. Who would not go to these wretched beings to tell them of Christ? Shall we have the gospel, and all its multiplied blessings, and not pity those who are perishing in darkness; six hundred millions of our fellow men in darkness and the shadow of death. Giving to the heathen does not impoverish our own churches but enriches them. Never were our own societies so richly favoured of heaven, as since the establishment of the Foreign Missionary Society. 'He that watereth shall be watered also himself.'

"Let us be faithful, humble, and persevering, that at last we may meet 'where the weary are at rest.'"

"*Andover*, *March* 3, 1815.

"VERY DEAR SISTER,—Permit me to rejoice with you upon the reception of another favour, that of a little daughter whom God hath graciously given you. While like Mary, your soul doth magnify the Lord for so distinguished a blessing, you will be mindful of your increased obligations to devote yourself and all yours to our heavenly Parent. As pleasant as the little babes may now appear to you, and as dearly as you may and doubtless do love them, you will lend them to the Lord as long as they live. At present, your attention is directed to their perishable bodies, excepting what may be done by supplicating for them the blessings of Divine grace. Soon duties infinitely more responsible will devolve upon you; that of enriching their minds with the truths of God's word, and of leading them as lost sinners to the Saviour of the world. In discharging these duties, you will find much to interest and encourage you. By the Divine blessing the instruction which they may receive from you in early life, may be like precious seed springing up into everlasting life. The promises of God's word, which are connected with the faithfulness of pious parents, are sufficient to excite all to the most persevering exertions.

"I hope to see you this spring, and tell you more than I can write at present. May you have the smiles of the Saviour; may you 'be steadfast, immoveable,' and your 'path that of the just which shineth more and more unto the perfect day."

In his Journal, *August* 26, 1817, he thus writes, "In view of the approaching solemnities of my ordination as a missionary to the heathen, I desire this day to humble myself before God and plead for the influences of the Holy Spirit. In this dedication Christ must have all. The examination of the subject of missions, after years of serious and painful inquiry, has terminated in a tranquil conviction of duty. Weak and unworthy as I am, this is my consolation, that the Lord will not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax. This is all my hope. 'As a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him.' Will the Redeemer leave me to languish and faint in a foreign land? Will he cast me from his presence? No, Divine Saviour, thou wilt never leave me, never forsake me. Though far from parents and friends, thy presence will support and comfort me, and the Holy Spirit guide me into all truth. If the Lord be on my side, 'I will not fear, though an host encamp against me,' though I be buried in the sea. 'My grace,' saith God, 'is sufficient for thee.' Now, blessed God, accept this surrender of my all into thy hands; and when I present myself in a public manner to take the most sacred vows upon me, then wilt thou graciously accept the offering, and grant me 'an unction from the Holy One.' Guide me, O thou great Jehovah, while I wander as a stranger and a pilgrim; and when the work which thou hast for me to do is completed, then may I say, 'I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righte-

ousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me in that day.'

The following letter to his parents, written a short time after his ordination, will evince the very happy state of his mind on that memorable day.

"*Andover, September* 8, 1817.

"Dear Parents.—Received this morning your very interesting letter of the 20th of August, and read it with emotions never before experienced. I cannot be sufficiently thankful that my parents have cheerfully resigned me to the direction of the great Head of the Church. I have no doubt that in the resignation of so dear an earthly treasure, God has imparted the richer blessings of his grace, and enabled you to say,

'Whate'er my duty bids me give,
I cheerfully resign.'

"Before the reception of this letter, you will learn the interesting events of last Wednesday. It was a day which I shall ever remember with peculiar pleasure, as the day of my public dedication to God and to the church. I was not sensible of the least reserve. I could subscribe with my hand to be *forever* the Lord's, to be sent *any where*, to do *any thing*, to suffer *any affliction*, to endure *any hardship*, to live and die a missionary. I could lay my hand on my heart and say, 'Lord, send me to the ends of the earth; send me to the rough and uncivilized regions of Africa; send me to prison, to tortures, to death; if it be thy will and for the promotion of thy glory.' God has truly verified his promise, that his grace shall be equal to the day. And I have strong confidence that he will *never* leave me, *never* forsake me. Though my way be on the great deep, he who said to the troubled waves, 'peace, be still,' will be ever by my side. Though I linger in a prison, or expire at the

stake, I will never fear any evil, 'for thou, Lord, art with me.' Never was I more deeply sensible of my entire *weakness*, and utter *unworthiness* of Divine favour. If I get to heaven, I must sing every step of the way thither, *grace*, *grace*, *boundless*, *sovereign grace*. Never did I see more of the vanity, and unsatisfying nature of all things below, nor feel a greater desire to relinquish my earthly all to Christ. Still how weak my resolutions! But,

> 'When I am weak, then am I strong;
> Grace is my shield, and Christ my song.'

"I cannot believe that in dedicating myself to the work of a missionary, I have mistaken the path of duty. I believe what a good minister once told me, that the path of duty will be made exceedingly plain. My dear parents, short but pleasing is our residence below. Few days pass, and we are no longer pilgrims, sojourners, strangers; but fellow-citizens with the saints and with the household of God. Soon we shall know no longer disappointments, tears, groans, sickness, trouble; but clasped in the arms of our (now) absent Saviour, shall rest with the Redeemed, and

> 'Not a wave of trouble roll
> Across our peaceful breast.'

"My health was never better; it is apparently perfect. It shall all be given to Christ; and if I had ten thousand talents more than I possess, I would give them all to my blessed Saviour. But my dear parents, never cease to pray for your feeble, unworthy son, that he may finish the work assigned him, turn many from darkness to light, and finally be received to glory with the redeemed; with pious friends, with dear parents, to part no more."

Having completed the usual course of theological studies, Mr. Parsons took leave of the seminary in September, 1817, and returned to Vermont. During

a few of the last months of his residence at Andover, he preached in various places. It is impossible to speak definitely of his usefulness in the seminary or the region around it. Undoubtedly many felt the influence of his deep seriousness and unfeigned piety. It is evident that he did considerable to promote vital godliness, and an intelligent missionary zeal. Encircled with those, who have since become heralds of the cross in heathen lands, domestic missionaries and pastors of churches, and many of those being his intimate friends, his influence was highly salutary. That it was not small will appear from the fact, that during his last year at Andover, he was president of a respectable association, called "The Society of Inquiry on the Subject of Missions." In that day when all the bearings of our actions, and all the consequences of our conduct shall be known, it may appear that his usefulness was on the whole, as great as during any other part of his life. To be confident, however, on this point would be highly improper. But this is certain, that his exemplary faithfulness and fervent supplications were not in vain.

MEMOIR.

PART II.

SKETCHES OF MR. PARSONS' MISSIONARY LABOURS IN AMERICA.

We come now to a new era in the history of Mr. Parsons, to the commencement of his public labours as an evangelist and missionary. Then he became a public servant of the church.

Several applications for ministerial services had been made to him; but he chose to accept an invitation from the Vermont Missionary Society; having had unusual desires to be useful in this state before his departure from his native land.

He had contemplated a short tour as an agent for the American Board; and I believe he did spend a few weeks in the month of October in visiting the heathen-school societies, which he had previously formed. But of his services during this month I find no record.

He commenced his mission under the direction of the Vermont Society about the 1st of November.

While a student in theology, Mr. Parsons mentioned to the writer, that he had often desired to labour for a season in some obscure place,—make it his supreme object to promote the conversion of sinners, and have the unspeakable delight of seeing many souls brought home to God. The blessing so earnestly and repeatedly sought he was soon to enjoy. The history of this mission will be learned from his own pen.

In his journal, dated "November 2, 1817," I find the following observations:—

"That this mission may be for the glory of God, and for the advancement of the kingdom of Christ, the following regulations with respect to my conduct may, by the Divine blessing, afford essential assistance.

"1. Always practice the duties which are enjoined upon others.

"2. Devote Saturday to a holy consecration of myself to God in reference to the work of the Sabbath.

"3. Be sober in conversation, humble in deportment, and faithful to the work of an evangelist.

"4. In disputations be *candid* and *gentle*, yet prompt in the vindication of truth.

"5. Let every sermon be *practical*, *simple*, and *instructive*, delivered with ease and solemnity.

"6. In preaching to Christians of different denominations, I will endeavour to excite a spirit of brotherly love, and of prayer for the diffusion of the Gospel.

"7. Always be particular in ascribing the success which may accompany my exertions to the influences of the Holy Spirit."

It was important for Mr. Parsons, as a missionary, to keep an accurate journal, and to be particular, and sometimes minute in recording facts and conversations. As his intercourse with persons in different circumstances, and of widely different character, tended to increase his knowledge of human nature, it was desirable to retain this knowledge. This would be most effectually done by committing to paper, while the occurrences were recent, what appeared most interesting. But the original journal is too long for insertion, and in some instances too minute to be generally interesting. At the close of

his mission, he presented to the Trustees of the Society a report, giving a general view of his labours and success. From the report I select the following extract, which gives an interesting representation of the success with which the friends of truth struggled against the opposition they had to encounter in a particular quarter.

"On Wednesday, February 11, I was requested to preach in Hardwick, before the Society for the reformation of morals. As circumstances connected with this association are peculiar and interesting, it may not be improper to relate them.

"For some years after the organization of the society, the most determined opposition prevailed, which eventually damped the zeal of its firmest supporters. At a meeting in March, 1816, it was for sometime made a question, whether an immediate dissolution would not, under existing difficulties, be desirable. Unwilling to yield in the accomplishment of the object for which they associated, and stimulated by a spirit of benevolence and piety, the members of the society resolved to make their last efforts with the rising generation. The attempt was arduous, and the prospect of success unpromising. Many of the youth had received, from their infancy, the bitterest prejudices against the Holy Scriptures, and were beginning to exhibit the fruits of infidelity. To counteract the influence of prejudice and corruption, to divert the minds of youth from favourite objects of pursuit, appeared to many like the fruitless attempt of the enthusiast.

"But the friends of piety remained firm in their resolution, although at times they were obliged "to hope against hope." The beginning was small. A few parents assembled with their children the ensuing Sabbath evening, and after explaining the object of the society, and impressing the duties of religion, commended them to the Saviour of sinners. Their

prayers were not in vain. During the summer, Sabbath schools were established in Greensborough and Craftsbury, embracing children of different religious persuasions, who were ambitious to excel in their knowledge of the word of God. The succeeding June, at a public exhibition in Greensborough, were present, at an early hour, three hundred children. Many chapters in the Bible, and most of the questions in the different catechisms, were recited with a promptitude and solemnity, which astonished every observer. Towards the close of the exercises was witnessed a scene which drew tears from every eye. The following question, (or one similar) was directed to a young lady, 'what good excuse have you for not repenting?' She wept, and was unable to reply. It was put to the second and to the third with the same effect. Soon, not the children only, but the whole assembly were weeping. Many said, 'how dreadful is this place, for God is here.' Those, who assembled, purely from motives of curiosity, were pricked in their hearts, and cried out in the anguish of a wounded spirit, 'what must we do to be saved?' These impressions were lasting and salutary. Within a few weeks, thirty of the pupils, and as many of their parents, were made to rejoice in hope of the glory of God. Among these are a number of little children of twelve or fourteen years, and a few young men, who are now preparing for the ministry. In this revival of religion more than one hundred made a public profession of their faith in Jesus."

Upon a revival of religion that had recently taken place in Troy and its adjacent towns, we have the following remarks :—

"Troy (formerly Missisque) contains thirty-five families. Previous to the revival, only one individual was known as a professor of religion, and only one family in which were offered morning and even-

ing sacrifices. From information, I have been led to believe, that, in scarce any place, did the sins of Sabbath-breaking, swearing, and intoxication, prevail to a more alarming excess. Especially, for a few months previous to this, every thing seemed to be ripening for the judgment of Heaven. But he, who is rich in mercy, looked down with compassion. It is difficult, if not impossible, to account upon natural principles for the first serious impressions. We can recur to no alarming providences, no appeal to the passions, no allusions to the wrath to come. But God, determining to bring into contempt all human glory, hath accomplished the work *himself*. Some were convicted in the field, others during the silence of the night; some by hearing the name of God blasphemed, others by reflecting upon death, and the subsequent events of the judgment day. At my first meeting, I perceived an unusual attention. Every ear was opened to receive instruction, and many expressed by their countenance and actions the keen distress of a wounded conscience. The ensuing week, convictions and conversions were multiplied. At some of the religious conferences, more than twenty requested the prayers of their Christian friends.

"On Thursday the 5th of February, assisted the Rev. Mr. Leland of Derby, in organising a church, consisting of twelve members, all of whom gave evidence of renewing grace. At the close of the exercises, the sacrament of the Lord's Supper was administered for the *first* time in Troy. The season will ever be remembered with peculiar gratitude. The Holy Ghost rested upon us. Not an individual of the vast multitude was inattentive, or unaffected. Many who assembled from motives of curiosity, were pricked in their hearts. They returned not to *ridicule*, but to *weep* in secret. The Lord Jesus was made known in the breaking of bread. Christians were glad when they saw the Lord. Sinners looked upon him whom they had crucified, and mourned.

"After this circumstances occurred which checked the progress of the work; and while Christians were contending about the mode of introduction into the church, a number drew back, it is to be feared, to perdition—an event which cannot be too deeply regretted, nor too deeply engraved upon the memory of those from whom shall be required the blood of souls. For some weeks the operations of the Spirit were suspended; and when the rage of contention subsided, and the children of God repaired again to the throne of grace, the heavens gathered blackness, portending a plentiful shower. The Lord came down in his glory. In vain was the virulence of the moralist, or the sneers of the infidel. Nothing was able to oppose, with success, the influences of the Spirit. No heart was too hard to be melted, no will too stubborn to be bowed, no sinner too abandoned to be reclaimed. The Sabbath-breaker, the swearer, the drunkard, were humbled at the footstool of mercy. They were monuments of grace. They were brands plucked out of the fire. Every house, for a distance of more than twenty miles, was open for instruction. The church was soon enlarged to forty-five members, and many more were the evident subjects of grace. The neighbouring towns were blessed with the same out-pourings of the Holy Ghost. Considerable additions have since been made to the church, and many are now inquiring, 'what shall we do to be saved?' The unanimity which exists both in the church and society is uncommon and auspicious. The Lord is doing a great work in that place, and to him be all the glory. There have been a few instances of hopeful conversions in Potten and Sutton, in the province of Canada. There is still the greatest anxiety to hear the gospel, and the fairest prospects of usefulness presented to the missionary.

"At one time, I recollect, I called upon an aged woman of ninety-six years, who is just sinking into the grave. She took me by the hand, and raising her

eyes to heaven, exclaimed, with almost celestial raptures, 'I thank the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, for sending his servant to us this day. May the Lord bless you, my dear friend.' And then, for a moment, she sat in silence, overcome with joy and gratitude. I spent some time in conversation, and received much instruction from this eminent servant of the Lord, whose eyes were fixed upon the visions of God, and whom I shall not probably see again till the morn of the resurrection."

The following reflections appear in Mr. Parsons' journal, dated May 29, 1818:—

"Through the multiplicity of my duties as a missionary, I have thus long, with sorrow I mention it, passed in silence the dealings of God with me. The clearest displays of Divine glory in the conversion of sinners will not promote personal piety, without the ardent struggles of *secret* devotion. To maintain a regular and endearing walk with God, to rise above the frowns and flatteries of the world, to discharge acceptably the responsible duties of an ambassador of Christ, every faculty of the soul must be consecrated to the work of the Lord, and every moment convey to heaven the fervent sighs of a mind endued with the unction of the Holy One.

"Were I to describe the character of a *true* missionary, he should be one whose eyes were closed upon the world, and fixed steadily upon the visions of God. In his closet he should every day wrestle in prayer, till his face shone with the glory of heaven. He should pour forth the sighs of a broken heart, and wait at the footstool of mercy till the Saviour appeared in his beauty and glory. In conversation he should be serious, unaffected, and instructive, accommodating himself to the most illiterate child, and yet enriching the higher circles with the ardour of his devotions. He should be modest and pliable, but in-

flexible in the support of the truth as it is in Jesus. Passing by the unessential points of difference existing among real Christians, his attention should be fixed upon the salvation of sinners, and the universal diffusion of light and knowledge. In the desk, his feelings should vibrate to every sentiment proclaimed, and the ardour of piety should be diffused through every sentence. He should know how to fix every eye, and engage the affections of every heart. He should be able to discern the feelings of piety, though concealed in the rubbish of education, prejudice, or sloth. He should drive the hypocrite from the strong holds of delusion, and open to the stupid sinner the torments of the damned. He should consider himself a messenger from Heaven, a guide to souls, an example to all who believe. He should be always ready to be summoned to his Judge, with the animating assurance of receiving the reward of a faithful and devoted servant of Jesus.

"But with mourning I retrace the steps of my past unfaithful and almost unprofitable life. Yet with humble gratitude, and with unceasing praise, would I recount the many instances of conviction and conversion, which I have been permitted to witness. To God, and to God alone, be all the glory."

Journal—"The prudential committee of the Board for Foreign Missions, at a meeting held at Andover, September 24, 1818, requested Mr. Pliny Fisk and myself to prepare as soon as possible for a mission to Western Asia. *The object is*,

"I. To acquire particular information respecting the state of religion, by correspondence or otherwise, in Asiatic Turkey.

"II. To ascertain the most promising place for the establishment of Christian missions, and the best means of conducting them.

"III. To inquire by what means the Scriptures

and religious tracts may be most advantageously circulated."

"*September* 24, 1818.—Received this morning the request of the prudential committee that immediate preparation be made for a mission to the *Holy Land*. With mingled emotions of joy and sorrow I received this interesting information. The idea of a *permanent station* in the vineyard of Christ, after many years of deep solicitude and increasing anxiety; the peculiar interposition of Divine Providence with regard to this appointment, and the prospect of labouring in a land, with which is associated every thing endearing to a Christian believer, occasioned a most ardent expression of gratitude and thanksgiving. But my rejoicing was with trembling. The expectation of a station so conspicuous to the known world, the amazing responsibility which must of necessity rest upon us, the *temptations* and dangers connected with the undertaking, seemed sufficient to require *mourning* instead of joy, and *despair* instead of hope. In view of my entire inability for a work so important, I could often plead, 'Lord, send by whom thou wilt: let *me* be excused;' and the reply was often returned, 'who hath made man's mouth, or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the *blind*? Have not I the Lord? Now, therefore, go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say.' Here my doubts were removed. Lord, with thy presence I will go, with thy armour and shield I will fight the battles of the Most High; with thy Spirit I will leave *all* I hold dear below, rejoicing that I am counted worthy to bear to the land of darkness and woe the light of salvation, the glad tidings of peace.

"Come now the happy day, which shall bear me to the heathen world. In the arms of Jesus I am *safe;* with the prayers of ten thousand Christians I need not fear. With the Holy Spirit I may yet bring many sons and daughters to glory, and die with joyful expectations of a better world.

"*Oct.* 1, 1818.—With brother Fisk this day has been set apart for fasting and prayer, in reference to our contemplated mission. A number of questions were prepared for a guide to our inquiries. 1. In what particulars have we neglected our duty? By permitting worldly business to occupy those hours which should have been devoted to sacred duties; by too often neglecting the Scriptures; by misimproving many opportunities for exhortation and instruction; by permitting the duties of the week to occupy the hours of the Sabbath; and by indulging in improper conversation.—After singing the 51st Psalm, we made our confessions to God.

"2. What sins most easily beset us?

"Vanity in regard to special attainments or to particular favours. Unholy affections; despondency in view of trials. To overcome them, keep in view the perfection which God requires; fly from temptation; cultivate the habit of incessant prayer in every situation.

"*Question* 3.—How shall we promote personal holiness, and best subserve the interests of the Redeemer's kingdom?

"By keeping a journal; observing days of fasting and prayer; by Christian correspondence; by frequent conversation with those with whom we may associate upon practical piety; by disseminating recent information upon the subject of missions; by enlisting the prayers of Christians.

"Most of this day has been devoted to prayer. It has not been unprofitable. The Lord accept our feeble attempt to obtain his blessing, and grant that his presence may go with us, when we leave all for his kingdom; and may our way be prospered, and our mission continued for a long time yet to come.

"*Oct.* 8.—Pursuing our inquiries, we this day endeavoured to set our faces toward the holy temple, and by fasting and prayer to humble ourselves before God

"*Question* 4.—Qualifications?

"Love for the work; perseverance in duty, fortitude in danger, and zeal for the salvation of the heathen. A disposition mild and forbearing; a mind cheerful, generous, and devotional. A hope in Christ, strong and increasing, an entire resignation to the will of God, and an unshaken confidence in the complete fulfilment of every Divine promise. We need *humility*. This excellent trait of character should appear in our conversation, deportment, and public duties.

"*Question* 5.—What are our peculiar duties to each other?

"Our hearts should be knit together as the heart of one man. Our employments, our duties, our plans must aim *incessantly* at the same object. We must possess the most implicit *confidence* in each other's pursuits, and seize every opportunity to impart mutual consolation, and to inspire a holy resolution in the work of the Lord. We must ever remember, that where the spirit of the Lord is, there is *peace*, a sweet unanimity of feeling, and sacred devotedness to the interests of the church. Woe be to us, if we continue not in the spirit of the Gospel of peace. Woe be to us, if we be not crucified to the world, if we continue not to grow in grace, if we follow not our Divine Master, who went about doing good.

"This subject was deferred till the ordination at Salem."

The ordination here alluded to was that of his companion in labour, and of two other foreign missionaries.

"*Salem*, *Nov.* 6, 1818.—Set apart this day, agreeably to appointment, for the purpose of a more particular examination of our duty. After prayer and confession of our sins, the subject of a mutual and

private dedication of ourselves to the work assigned us was introduced and considered. Many advantages, it was supposed, might be derived from a formal consecration to this mission. It may remind us more frequently that the vows of the Lord are upon us; it may be of use in some seasons of trial, in some unexpected affliction to which this work must expose us. After mature reflection, and (we would hope) after imploring the direction of the Holy Spirit, we cheerfully agreed to subscribe our names to the following covenant.

"As Christians, as ministers, and as missionaries, we have been separately consecrated to God; we do now, in a united private capacity, not as an unmeaning ceremony, but with sincerity of heart, and with earnest prayer for Divine assistance, give ourselves to each *other*. We enter into a holy *covenant*, by which we engage, with Divine assistance, to keep ourselves from every employment which may impede our progress in the work to which we are sacredly devoted. We are to live in love; to maintain the most perfect harmony in feeling, of design, and of operation; to unite our strength, our talents, and our influence, for the conversion of the heathen. We give ourselves to each other in all our *private* duties, engaging to make each other's interest our own at the throne of grace, and to strive together for high attainments in piety, for entire devotedness to the cause of Christ, for pure affections, for a humble walk with God. For this purpose we will endeavour to subdue every unhallowed, every ambitious desire, remembering that he who would be the greatest, must be the *least* of all. In all things we are to be *equal*.

"We give ourselves to each other in the *public* duties of our office, uniting our exertions and our counsels for the extension of the Gospel of peace, endeavouring to be an example to the heathen in

every good work; and by a holy, humble, and amiable deportment, to win them to the truth as it is in Jesus.

"We will *never* separate unless duty very evidently require it; and then it must be by mutual counsel, and with Christian attachment.

"We give ourselves to each other in all our *afflictions*, *temptations*, and *persecutions*, having our hearts knit together as the heart of one man, and performing all the duties of Christians and friends.

"And while we take this covenant upon ourselves, it is with earnest prayer that in life we may *long* be united, and in death not far divided.

"PLINY FISK.
"LEVI PARSONS.

Salem, Nov. 6, 1818."

Although Messrs. Parsons and Fisk had been directed to make speedy preparation for a mission to Western Asia; yet the prudential committee judged it expedient to retain them for a season in this country to labour as agents for the Board. Accordingly, Mr. Fisk went to the south, and spent some time in Charleston, S. C. where provision was made for his permanent support. Mr. Parsons was directed to labour in Vermont and New York. The following remarks respecting the duty and encouragement of an agent, the history of his agency, and devotional reflections, are contained in his private journal.

"As an encouragement the agent must keep continually in view the good which may result from his efforts. He must not let his mind be affected by the low standard of others.

"The following course is suggested:—

"1. He will call upon the minister and upon other persons of influence in religious charity. Do this before the subject is presented in public; and in many cases spend an evening in company with ten

or twenty, who will be disposed to favour the object. This must be done with caution lest the object be defeated.

" II. Preach on the subject of missions three or four times to the same people, as may be considered best. Spend two or three weeks in an important town and its vicinity.

" In the course of the sermons speak of the *miserable condition* of the heathen world; of the duty of sending the gospel to all nations, proved by Scripture, and on the principle of general benevolence; of the gospel as designed to renew the world, and of the success which has attended missions as an evidence that they are the cause of God. No nation was ever yet converted to Christianity except by missionaries. The Christian world are able to send the Gospel to all nations. The expense of war would support ten thousand missionaries from the United States. The expense of litigation in Vermont would raise annually four hundred thousand; and in Boston, one hundred thousand. In order to this (the evangelizing of the world) Christians must enter upon the work with zeal and perseverance.—The peculiar duties of the American churches arise from an abundance of temporal and spiritual blessings.

" III. Objections are to be treated rather as inquiries than as formal objections.

" IV. The agent will keep in view two things: the *necessity* of raising the standard of piety; and the desirableness of uniting the whole community in a permanent plan of usefulness."

On the next day he went to Hanover, N. H.

Journal. " *Saturday Nov.* 14.—Have had occasion to remember the instruction of St. Paul to Timothy; 'in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves, if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledgment of the truth.' To possess serenity of mind, while encountering with the scoffs and

insults of opposers, is one of the most important, one of the most difficult attainments in the Christian character. Perhaps no qualification for a missionary is more amiable and useful. In future may this heavenly grace appear conspicuous in my conversation and deportment.

"*Monday Evening Nov.* 16.—A remark made this day in conversation with a brother in the ministry, 'that a minister's usefulness depends upon his private walk with God,' cannot be too often repeated. The Lord will honour those who honour him. He will make them his peculiar people, and grant them peculiar blessings. I will take up a lamentation, I will weep in secret, that my conversation is not in heaven; that there are so seldom sweet meltings of soul after God.

"This evening, I would remember that every visit should leave an impression of the presence of the Saviour. Truth is to be spoken in small things in unequivocal terms."

"In view of recent afflictions and of the peculiar necessity of special grace, I would this day, by fasting and prayer, seek the assistance and blessing of our heavenly Father.

"*My first request* to God is, that I may know more of his character, and bear more and more of his image. My soul panteth after God. When shall I see him; and what is more, when shall I be like him? Were my eyes enlightened by the Holy Spirit, I should see him in his works, in storms, rain, snow, heat and cold. I should see him in his *Word* unfolding the perfections of his character; I should see him in the countenances of his children, and in the disposal of sinners.

"If I were like God, I should be sensible of sweet meltings of soul while in his presence; and of ardent desires to consecrate every moment to his service. I should know my duty, and discharge it; afflictions would be blessings; earth would be heaven.

"*My second request* is, that the dear lambs in the flock of Christ in Troy, Vt. may be under the special protection of the Head of the Church. I am to see them no more at present; but the blessed Jesus is with them always, to counsel, direct, comfort, and save them. O may that church *live* before thee. Let it be purified, enlarged and beautified, and may 'her walls be salvation, and her gates praise.' After crossing this boisterous sea, may we be united in bonds of sweetest harmony, and with united voice cry, 'worthy is the Lamb.'

"*Another request* is, that my father's family may enjoy the presence of the Saviour. I leave them with our blessed Redeemer. Great has been the anxiety of my parents for me, and as great, if possible, shall be my solicitude for them. Morning and evening shall my prayers ascend to God for my parents, that their usefulness may continue, their consolations increase, their sun set serenely, and the opening heavens shed upon them the light of eternal day. For my dear brothers, I will implore pardoning mercy. We part to meet not again in time. Shall we meet at thy right hand, O my Saviour? Be thou their friend; sprinkle them with thy blood, and raise them to glory."

On his way to the state of New York, the principal field of his labours and success, we had the happiness of receiving a visit from Mr. Parsons. The interview was precious, and our united prayer was, that Jehovah would send salvation to the land once wet with the Saviour's blood. On parting, referring to his agency, I remarked, perhaps injudiciously, that I should feel some reluctance to engaging in such an enterprise at such an inclement season. He pleasantly replied, "You have your sources of comfort, I have mine."

Journal—"*January* 23, 1819.—Have not been so

strict in self-examination, so punctual in secret duty, as my happiness and the cause of Christ require. The pressure of business, and the debility occasioned by continued exertions have pleaded an excuse from communion with my Lord and Master. If I am any thing but sin, if I have any exercises which are not entirely polluted, grace, sovereign grace, must have the praise. To redeem a sinner so vile, to change and purify a nature so corrupt, must require the exertions of an *infinite* Saviour, the compassion of a God. And must I still wander in darkness, grovel in the dust, forget my own mercies, and abuse my privileges? Were I like that beloved missionary, *Brainerd*, how should I fly away from things so vile, engage in the more important, more exalted duties of this holy profession

"Were I what I should be, with what devotion should I lead the people of God to the throne of grace! With what clearness and power should I on the morrow plead the cause of souls; with what pungent conviction of truth I might call into action the slumbering energies of the church! My strength is in Jesus. But my repeated forgetfulness of his mercy prevents near approaches to the mercy-seat, intercepts the glory of his countenance, and turns my joy into sorrow.—I will kneel before my Maker, I will remember his covenant, I will wait at his footstool. Perhaps I may have one pledge of pardon, one token of his protection. Perhaps I may meet him in his temple.

"*Herkimer*, *January* 30.—Retired this evening to prepare for the holy Sabbath. How precious are those moments in which there is communion with the Saviour, weeping for sin, and peace in believing! With this joy the stranger intermeddleth not. It is reserved for those who love our Lord Jesus Christ. To-morrow the cause of missions must be vindicated, objections answered, and the miseries of millions of

heathen proclaimed. To discharge such duties, it is necessary to remember that it is of the Lord to give success; that the influence may be felt for ages to come; that multitudes may be redeemed from destruction by the effect of one sermon. My work here will be short. Lord support my sinking soul, increase my languishing faith, sanctify my unholy affections, and may I enter the 'holy of holies' with acceptable incense.

"*Utica, February* 6, 1819.—In view of the work now before me in this vicinity, it is suitable that I should acknowledge my dependence, and seek assistance from him who only can open the hearts of men. I would come before this people as a servant of Immanuel, pleading his cause, and relying upon his Spirit for success. Dismiss then every fear, prepare thyself for the field, stand up with boldness to the work; dread not the frown of the world; thy God is with thee, his angel will go before thee, to keep thee from the snares of the adversary. May this day be holy; the Lord reclaim my wandering affections, sanctify me for his worship, and accept my feeble attempts to glorify his name.

"*Sangerfield, February* 13, 1819.—The Lord was with me by his Spirit last Sabbath. In the morning I was sensible of more spiritual enjoyment than at any time since the commencement of this mission. 'Those that honour me, I will honour,' is the unchangeable counsel of Heaven. Be it remembered, be it written upon the tablet of my heart, that success and enjoyment in ministerial duty depend upon a spirit of prayer. A minister of the gospel should be very constant and very frequent in secret communion with his Redeemer. The love of Christ should constrain him to be humble, holy, and persevering. My health is very feeble; but let me not repine, this world is a vale of tears. To-morrow, important and interesting duties will devolve upon me. Through

Christ who strengthens me I can do all things. Through his grace the hearts of many will be opened to aid the cause of missions."

Extract from a letter to myself.

"*Sangerfield, February* 15, 1819.

"DEAR BROTHER,—At times my enjoyment in Divine things has been unusual. The blessed Saviour has not been far from me. Many prayers are offered for the success of our proposed mission. O that I had the spirit of an apostle. Will it not be the great desire of your heart that I may be exceedingly humble, and yet exceedingly courageous in the service of our Lord? It is an honour of which I am truly unworthy to assist in carrying back to Jerusalem the proclamation of pardon through a Redeemer's blood.

"I must close. Be very faithful; suffer with Christ, and then we may 'sit together in heavenly places.'"

Journal—"*February* 26.—Visited a few families in Madison, and found Christians disposed to promote the good work; but two infidels had the hardihood to assert, that 'this noise about religion is all folly; the heathen are on their way to glory as well as Christians.' Poor deluded mortals! Then our Saviour was an impostor; for he affirmed, 'he that believeth not shall be damned.' Then Paul was an enthusiast, for he suffered the loss of all things; for what? for the salvation of those who would certainly be saved, without the exertions of any one. The Lord subdue these bold enemies of the cross of Christ.

"*March* 16.—Have not experienced a more severe affliction than the one this day presented. Every attempt to plead for the heathen is fruitless. Even Christians have not a free-will offering for the Lord. There is no eye to pity, no heart to feel. Surely the

hand of God is in this event. Some purpose of mercy is to be disclosed, some Christian virtue to be nourished. Perhaps it is to humble the pride of my heart; to teach me patience in adversity, and perseverance in the cause of souls. In this world, faith is the life of exertion; it is that vital principle which supports and adorns the believer on his passage to glory; which enables him in adversity, and even in the fire of persecution, to lift up his eye to heaven, exclaiming, 'My Redeemer lives, and I shall see him for myself.' Perhaps a way may yet open for usefulness, or what is preferable, perhaps the Saviour will reach forth his hand, saying, 'It is I, be not afraid.'"

In the following extract, dated Verona, March 18, we have a description of the wickedness of the human heart, which forcibly reminds us of some of the representations of Edwards and Brainerd on the same subject:—

"*Verona, March* 18.—In what language can I describe the abominations of the heart; it is a cell full of venomous serpents; a sepulchre garnished, but full of dead men's bones; a fountain from which flows the poison of death; a pit without a bottom, containing degrees of corruption, infinite upon infinite. If I find a good desire within me, it is a *stranger*, a *foreigner* sent from the world of light and purity. If I speak a holy word, or perform a holy action, the occasion of it must be an unnatural principle within. How can one dream of heaven, while unrenewed? How can the sinner say, I am innocent? It is like a prisoner clanking his chains, and saying, 'I am free;' like a blind man boasting of the strength of his sight. The sinner is dead, yet he knows it not.

"This day procured rules of prudence, and will endeavour to profit by their instruction.

'1. One must not spend all that he hath; do all he can; tell all he knows; believe all he hears.

' II. Think before *whom* you speak; *why* and *what* you speak; *observa, audi, cerne, face.*

' III. Know how to be good-natured to all men.

' IV. Hear the advice of the town-clerk of Ephesus; do nothing *rashly.*

' V. When your spirit is heated is the time for the bridle.

' VI. In a violent impulse, be jealous, be afraid, lest you fall into temptation.

' VII. Never sacrifice hours in *contention.*

' VIII. Take no notice of the *calumniator.*

' IX. Keep company with your superiors.

' X. Be furnished with a stock of useful questions.

' XI. When you tell secrets, mind your *stops*, even with best friends.

' XII. If solicited to engage in civil concerns, reply, ' I am doing a great work: I cannot come.'

' XIII. Gain by every thing, even by reproaches.

' XIV. Tell a story with unstumbled brevity. Let not pleasantry become levity.

' XV. Have two heaps, one *unintelligibles*, the other *incurables.* When you find a subject incomprehensible, throw it into the first; when you find a man unpersuadable, throw him into the other.' "

These rules remind me of Cecil and Mason, but not having either of the authors at hand, I know not to which to ascribe them; nor am I very confident that they are the production of either.

When at Cazenovia, Mr. Parsons had some strong and distressing conflicts of mind, as will be seen by the remarks in his journal. " The boldness and fortitude of the men of this world are sufficient to put to shame the disciples of Jesus. They jeopard their lives in the field, forsake parents, wives, and families for the acquisition of wealth; toil, suffer, and die in defence of the cause of sin. The sinner, in his opposition to the gospel, laughs at difficulties, and moves forward with unyielding resolution. Not so with

Christians. Slothful, covetous, and timorous, they forget their high standing in the armies of Israel. Unmindful of the Captain of their salvation, they make but feeble efforts against the enemies of truth, and too often retire with shame and disgrace. Too many indulge in wantonness and sloth, revolving around in a beaten path of formal duties till the close of their mortal existence. They manifest not the self-denying spirit of apostles and martyrs. In these charges few professors are more concerned than myself. My unfaithfulness in duty, my ardent attachment to this world, occasion perpetual shame and alarm. In this condition, *I must not*, *I cannot live.*— Unless successful efforts be made against the corrupt affections of my heart, weeping and destruction will come upon me like a whirlwind. Something must be done,—immediately done. Already I see the enemy approaching; I feel the misgivings of guilt, the remorse occasioned by unfaithfulness and desertion. There must be a change, an *entire* change, or the Christian world will be veiled in weeping, and the anger of the Almighty burn against me. Too long have I lingered on the plains of Sodom, too long pursued the honours and pleasures of the world, too long listened to the suggestions of the father of lies.

" Jesus alone is my refuge. His arms are extended to receive those that escape to him. To him I would return weeping and penitent. He has grace, fortitude, and perseverance, to impart to the mourning believer. This day, in the strength of an Almighty Redeemer, I desire to take the vows of God upon me; solemnly engaging to renounce the world, to disregard its insinuations, flatteries, and frowns; to keep my attention fixed exclusively on the mission to Judea; to employ every moment, to engage every feeling for a spiritual crusade to the Holy Land. I engage to live nearer to the throne of grace than before, watch more closely the workings of sin within me, and press forward to eminent usefulness in the

church. I will strive to be a holy man, a humble disciple of the Saviour, till called to 'the rest which remaineth for the children of God.'"

Mr. Parsons had for years desired an opportunity of preaching to the American natives. This desire was granted. On the 7th of April, agreeably to a request and appointment previously made, he visited the Stockbridge Indians, under the care of the Rev. John Sergeant. Great preparations were made to receive him. It was at a late hour when he arrived, and though worn down with excessive fatigue, the sight of Indian blankets excited unusual animation. Never, probably, did he preach with more fervour; and the thought that his audience might be the descendants of Abraham inspired an ardour entirely unexpected. After sermon, the Indian chief, a large man of princely appearance, delivered an address to Mr. Parsons in the true style of Indian oratory. He thanked God that he had sent his servant among them, and that they had been permitted to hear "a great and important talk." He expressed his gratitude and that of his people for the good counsel of the missionary, and hoped that they should long bear in remembrance his faithful admonitions. Having delivered his speech, (which by gentlemen present was considered excellent,) he then read a "talk" in Indian and in English, which he desired Mr. Parsons to deliver to "the Jews, their forefathers, in Jerusalem." Then the Indians contributed in money 587 cents, and two gold ornaments. Next he was invited to the mission house, and presented with several small baskets curiously wrought and ornamented, and with an elegant pocket lantern, as a present to himself, containing on the bottom of it the following inscription:

> "This to illumine the streets of Jerusalem.
> Jerusalem is my chief joy."

At the close of this interview the Indians flocked

around Mr. Parsons, and caught him by the hand, saying, "We undersand you." Referring to this season, Mr. Parsons says, in a letter to his father, "Never did I rise so high above my ordinary course as when preaching Jesus to these once miserable pagans. The chief said, 'I thank God that he has put it into your heart to visit Jerusalem; I hope he will bless you, and enable you to turn many unto the Lord.' While he was delivering his address, I could from my heart call him *brother*. The events of this day will be held in pleasing remembrance through life. Degraded as are the wandering tribes, many of them will come to glory, and sit with Christ on his throne. The Lord make this season salutary to the kingdom of Christ."

Extracts from a letter to the Rev. Elisha Yale of Johnstown, N. Y.

"*Pompey, April* 20, 1819.

"My Dear Brother,—Yours of the 31st of March was duly received and perused, and reperused with peculiar satisfaction. The complete list of donations is forwarded from Kingsboro' and from Johnstown. Justice to the benevolence of your people demanded it; and other places apprized of your good works, may go and do likewise. The spirit of missions is prevailing, and will prevail even in *our* age, far beyond our limited calculations. Suppose that the single state of Vermont should present to the American Board the sum annually expended for purposes *unnecessary*, 3,000 missionaries would receive a competent support. (For litigation the tax is 400,000 dollars; for intemperance at least 800,000; for amusements, loss of time, splendid equipage, 400,000 more.) For a moment, let us suppose that all the members of *churches* in America devote that portion of their substance to Christ, which they now devote to objects of no consequence, either to their temporal or

spiritual enjoyment; and a sum would be raised sufficient to send the gospel to every pagan under heaven. Have then the professed disciples of Christ so far declined in zeal and piety? are they so indifferent to the souls of men, that even *this part* shall be absolutely refused, or given grudgingly? The excuses made by the saints are unreasonable, and highly criminal in the eyes of the great Head of the Church. There must be a change, an *important* change in the feelings of the expectants of glory, or infidelity will command an influence most alarming and formidable. Nothing but the return of primitive zeal and perseverance will raise our sinking churches from absolute dissolution. This subject, then, furnishes me with an answer to your interesting question, 'How may a minister strive lawfully to be the greatest?' Duty in his high and responsible station demands an earnest desire to attain a degree of piety, of zeal, and of humility, far beyond common examples. He who can see a world sinking to hell, while he possesses the means of recovery, and yet not feel his soul panting after more exalted piety, has certainly forfeited his high standing in the kingdom of the Redeemer. It is not only right, but it is *duty* to desire to bear more of the image of Christ, to be more devoted to his service than any with whom we associate. In a sense similar was not our Saviour great? As a man, he excelled the greatness of Moses and David—possessed far more the spirit of heaven—gave more spiritual instruction, and devoted his life more uniformly to the great business of his mission.

"My mission continues under the smiles of an indulgent Providence. But my time is short—already the time is approaching when I am to be here no more for ever.—Pray much for us, my brother, that we may be men of piety, humility, and of *faith*."

"*Marcellus, May* 1.—'Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?' So numerous and formidable are the ene-

mies of my soul; so arduous and responsible the duties of my station; that *frequent* examination and fasting are indispensable to safety and usefulness. The eyes of the church are directed to us,* as the messengers of salvation to the most interesting portion of our world. The enemies of religion are watching for an opportunity to defeat this noble enterprize of Christian benevolence. The best interests of Zion are embarked in a spiritual crusade to the land of promise; and upon its success is suspended, in a very important sense, the final dissolution of the empire of sin.

"More particularly let me consider that we are under the inspection of Him, whose eyes are as a flame of fire, and who will trace out the most secret sin, and hold it in utter detestation. If we seek the Lord, he will be found of us; but if we forsake him, he will cast us off forever. O my soul, why dost thou linger and yield to the suggestions of sin and Satan? Knowest thou not, that this is the place of danger and ruin; where thousands, once apparently distinguished for piety, have made shipwreck of the faith, and descended to the grave with sorrow and disgrace? Rather would I suffer the tortures of the rack, or be compelled to experience more anguish than was endured by a saint on earth, than draw back to the dishonour of my Saviour, and to the grief of the people of God.

"Was peculiarly favoured during the exercises of the Sabbath; pleaded the cause of Christ and of the heathen with unusual animation. But how various are the feelings of the children of God; at one time penitent, sorrowing, devout; at another, stubborn, unrelenting, covetous. In all the little events of life, the saint is disciplined for the service of the Redeemer. And could we trace out the invisible agency of God, we should behold him in the minute occur-

* His colleague, Rev. Mr. Fisk and himself.

rence, as distinctly as in the motion of the planetary world. It is undoubtedly true that reformation under slight chastisements prevents more aggravated judgments; and that Christians would often remove themselves from sorrow, by keeping a more steady eye upon the dealings of Providence. In this mission I have observed that *devotion* and *success* have been *inseparable companions*.

"*Auburn, May* 8, 1819.—Impressions received by the assembly of worshippers will be retained for a long time to come; many of them will live when I am dead. An improper *action, gesture*, or expression, may seal up a heart, which was just opening to receive the truth, may give strength to the cause of sin, and increase the danger of those who are already standing upon slippery places; while a single expression of breathing out of the soul to God in prayer, of panting for the glory of the Redeemer, may carry conviction to the most thoughtless wretch. A sermon of no uncommon merit, distinguished by no peculiar traits of genius, may, by a solemn and devotional utterance, leave an impression highly favourable to the cause of truth. Should all the ministers of the gospel commence the service of the sanctuary by *devout, pleading prayers*,—should they manifest a holy familiarity with the Saviour, the task of gaining the attention, and of affecting the heart, would be less difficult and arduous. The Sabbath would not be profaned by so many sleepy countenances, and by so many restless and indifferent worshippers. The feeling would be generally imbibed, 'this is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.' My heart's desire and prayer is, that my deportment may be unassuming and inviting; and that my manner of preaching may be simple, devotional, and energetic, that every duty may be discharged to the edification of God's people.

"*Bloomfield, May* 22.—It is refreshing to meet my Christian friends this evening in the delightful

service of prayer. So numerous and fervent are the intercessions of the saints for my success, that I am encouraged to rise and press forward with more assiduity and fortitude. The richest of heaven's blessings rest upon those dear saints who this evening pray for Jerusalem. The Lord will not be indifferent to their desire. Commune, O my soul, with thy Saviour, obtain his smiles, lean on his arm; then will the Sabbath be a delight; the offerings of this people will be abundant, the church will be enlarged, infidelity will retire, and the Saviour be hallowed by the assembly of his saints.

"Three miles below Rochester is one of the finest curiosities furnished in America: the Carthage bridge. It consists of one entire arch, 150 feet long, and 205 feet from the water. On the east side one may descend one hundred and four feet, and the arch above seems like the vault of heaven, and the gulf below like the opening of a bottomless pit.

"On my way to Lewistown, called upon the Rev. Mr. Crane, a missionary to the Indians. He lives upon a most elegant farm, situated upon the principal road. His ministry does not subject him to the trials and self-denial of Brainerd, the beloved missionary. On this beautiful spot Mr. Crane can participate in all the pleasures of refined society, and pursue his studies, without interruption, in the bosom of an affectionate family.

"Passing from Lewistown I soon came to the rock, called 'the Devil's Rock,' which rises in a perpendicular direction one hundred and fifty feet above the level of the water. During the French war, the Indians drove a large number of our soldiers over this precipice, and all of them were dashed in pieces by the fall. Two miles from this rock opened on a sudden a full view of *Niagara Falls*.

"Although at the distance of two miles, they were distinctly observed. The spray from the northwest corner ascended like the smoke of a great furnace.

Accompanied by a guide, I descended a stair-way one hundred and fifty feet, and beheld with my own eyes this great sight which has commanded the attention of the world. Standing upon the shore, beneath the stair-way, you seem to be enclosed in one vast prison, with walls around you of nearly two hundred feet in height. On the left, for more than a mile in extent, are precipitated all the waters of one of the largest rivers in our country. On the right the angry floods, dashing upon the rocks, present an aspect of horror. Passing over the river, about twenty rods below the falls, we ascended the rocks to the opposite bank, and from Table Rock beheld, in the most delightful attitude, the wonderful works of God. In a few moments we were completely dripping with the spray; in which appeared a rainbow, with all its bright and glowing colours. Here we stood, and with wonder, adored the great Original. Every object seemed to adore, and in silent accents proclaim the power of the eternal I AM. Debased and stupid must be that individual who can behold all this, without raising to heaven a soul filled with reverence and adoration. Returning the same way, and with our little canoe tossed upon the foaming billows, we sung the following lines, 'Our little bark on boisterous seas,' &c.

"The rapids above the falls present, if possible, a more grand and majestic appearance. The waters rushing forward with amazing velocity, dashing against the rocks, and raising on high their foaming billows, cannot be viewed but with emotions of terror.

"*June* 4.—Took a passage in the steam-boat to Painsville, Ohio, and arrived in two days. The severity of the storm, together with the improper conduct of many of the passengers, added not a little to my sorrow and anxiety. It became a question of serious import with regard to prayer in the cabin. The pious part of the passengers desired it; the irreligious were engaged in card playing, with apparent disapprobation of religious order and decorum.

However, through the influence of a friend, permission was obtained to close the day with prayer. After the passengers were collected, I read the 139th Psalm, and remarked upon the omnipresence of God; then kneeled down and commended ourselves to the Divine protection. The season was interesting, and the impressions produced may be salutary. My work with these precious souls is closed; I am never to see them again till the judgment of the great day.

"As yet I wander as a stranger and pilgrim, bearing about a body of sin and death, cherishing a trembling hope of attaining to the resurrection of the just. Every passing day records many imperfections and violations of the Divine injunctions, attended with painful and affecting circumstances. Every day the arms of everlasting love encircle me, protecting my soul from the snares of the adversary. What a strange existence? What a wilderness of gloom and sorrow! Yet it is not impassable. The way of the saint is through a dark, and at times, a cheerless region; through danger and persecution. Yet it is darkness in the midst of light; it is danger in the midst of perfect security; it is sorrow mingled with joy unspeakable and full of glory.—Sustained by a merciful providence, I have visited a dear brother, for whom many prayers have ascended to heaven. Situated as he is in this distant and uncultivated country, borne down with recent, severe affliction, my arrival was announced with every expression of gratitude." Referring again to the labours of the past Sabbath, he says, "The assembly wept profusely, and some evidently felt their danger. Opportunities for conversation with my brother are now past. I bless God for the privilege of conversing with him, of preaching to him, and of commending him to the Saviour of sinners. May his name stand engraven upon the Lamb's book of life."

Journal.—"*June* 12.—The Psalms abound with

expressions like these, 'My soul followeth hard after God; my soul panteth for the living God; I cry unto my God day and night; I lift up my soul unto thee,' which denote great advancement in piety and holiness. How few know the import of this language! How seldom does my own experience testify in favour of this exalted devotion! I reach after it, but do not obtain it; I see its value, yet it is through clouds and darkness; I walk towards it, but it is with trembling and deviating steps. This day, by fasting and prayer, I would sit at the feet of Jesus, and receive instructions from his lips. I would confess and forsake my sins, and, relying upon his faithfulness, would say, 'Lord, if thou wilt thou canst make me clean.' 'To whom shall we go but unto thee, thou hast the words of eternal life.'

"True piety may be defined, *knowledge of God*, with *approbation* of his *character;* knowledge of his *supremacy* as exalted above all; of his justice, as noticing the most secret departure from his law, with an inflexible determination to punish the incorrigible rebel; of his mercy, in providing a Saviour, and presenting pardon to the vilest offender that is penitent, and taking him from defilement and degradation to a throne on high. All this the devoted Christian sees in his God, and with rapture ascribes to him dominion and glory. Fixing his eye upon this source of all perfection, his soul pants after higher attainments in knowledge; after greater resemblance to the *object* of his supreme affection; after more fortitude and perseverance in the promotion of his kingdom. Every revolting emotion in his heart occasions a sigh; every instance of reproach or disrespect, perceived among the ungodly, produces a holy indignation, mingled with the tenderest compassion. Acquiescence in the character of the adorable Jehovah supports the zeal of the devoted missionary, elevates the soul of the expiring martyr, and conducts the depart-

ing spirit of the believer to the abode of safety and happiness.

"*Cooperstown*, *July* 4.—Found this morning the life of Brainerd, and read portions of it with the highest interest. Shame and sorrow have taken hold of me; mourning becomes me all my days. This devoted saint gained possession of the promised land even while tabernacling in the flesh. Can I not be as holy, devoted and useful?—*Evening*. Performed the duties of this day with but little interest to myself, or of pleasure to others. Most just is this affliction, and I will be dumb. My soul crieth after God, my exceeding joy. When shall I see him as he is?

"*Cherry Valley*, *July* 10.—One more Sabbath and my mission as an agent is sealed up unto the day of decision. In a few instances the cause of Christ has been essentially promoted; in many, my unfaithfulness occasions deep regret. This day, devoted to prayer, may direct my attention to the following subjects: *personal growth in grace; duty to families;* opposers and indifferent professors; supplications for my colleague, for the missionaries to Ceylon, Owyhee and Bombay, for the western Indians, and the children of Israel.

"My soul followeth hard after God. I cannot plead his cause without his Spirit; I cannot comfort the saints without consolation from heaven. Will the Lord pass me by? Do not be angry with me, but pardon my iniquities, for they are great.

Extracts from a letter to the Rev. Elisha Yale, of Johnstown, N. Y.

"*Albany*, *July* 14, 1819.

"My Dear Brother,—At Buffalo, I received your expected and truly refreshing letter. Thank you for the great and precious promises to which you direct my attention, and for all your prayers for our

usefulness and prosperity. They are all my consolation and all my desire. Did our Saviour say, 'I will never leave thee?' Then will we bid a last adieu to the land which gave us birth; to dear and much-respected parents; to kindred and friends, to encounter the perils of sea and land; to wander as pilgrims and *foreigners*, till we are invited home to our Father's house, which is eternal in the heavens. With such a guide, and with such a refuge, we need not fear to erect the standard of the cross within the walls of that once consecrated and beloved city, Jerusalem.

"I have now closed my mission in America, and expect to be in Boston as soon as possible. Truly the good hand of our God has been upon me; every day Divine goodness has encircled my path, and led me in the way of peace and holiness. Six thousand dollars have been presented as an offering for the salvation of the heathen.

"Two months past my health has been languishing, yet without fear of permanent disease. After a short season of relaxation, I may resume with renewed vigour the duties of my mission to the heathen. May I cherish the hope of a blessing upon Jerusalem; the thought is transporting! the permission to *anticipate* the spiritual welfare of Zion is an unspeakable privilege. My solicitude increases as the day approaches; but I can say it, my mind is tranquil; my resolution unshaken. Pray for me, my brother, that my faith fail not.

"*Saratoga Springs, July* 16.—For the recovery of my health have concluded to spend a few days in this place.

"I wish to inquire, can a plan be devised which will call into action the entire energies of the churches? What plan will succeed? I dare not speak with much confidence, but permit me to propose the following method:—*Let every Christian, male and female, bind himself, or herself, to pay a certain stated*

proportion of the annual income. Let the calculations be made at the commencement of the year, and strictly regarded in every article which a bountiful providence bestows. If a *tenth* be too much, say *less*, but let not the resolution, in any instance, be disregarded. Let every destitute church do the same. Let there not be one looker-on. Would not the wilderness soon rejoice with the songs of salvation? Something must be done to discipline, marshal, and call into action our scattered troops; or our exertions will be attended with loss and disgrace.—Who would recall our brethren, dearly beloved, from the instruction of heathen children? Who would dishearten those valiant soldiers who are fighting *our* battles, and extending *our* dominions? O my brother, let us persevere, for the *kingdom* is certainly ours."

"*Pittsfield, Thursday, July* 22.—Arrived at my father's house at eleven o'clock this morning, after an absence of seven months. Peculiar and instructive have been the dealings of Providence in relation to this mission preparatory to my final departure. With gratitude I would recollect the incessant care of my heavenly Father, and with deep repentance entreat forgiveness for every departure from the strictest rules of piety and rectitude."

Several circumstances contributed to the success of this mission. Mr. Parsons' patience and perseverance, the loveliness of his disposition, the pleasantness of his manners, the attractions of his public address; the fact also that he was destined as a messenger of mercy to the most interesting spot on earth; that he expected soon to walk on the mountains of Zion, Calvary, and Olivet, and the gratification of curiosity in seeing him,—all conspired to make a favourable impression, and render his agency prosperous. But notwithstanding these favourable circumstances, he was in some of his applications entirely

unsuccessful. The success of his mission, therefore, should be ascribed to the special favour of God in answer to fervent prayer.

The usefulness of the agency, which we have been contemplating, aside from the pecuniary aid afforded to the cause of missions, was doubtless considerable; but the extent of it cannot at present be accurately known. A respectable clergyman from the western section of New York, informed the writer, that Mr. Parsons was instrumental in giving a new impulse to the churches in that region, and that his ministrations were in a high degree interesting and salutary.

Immediately after his return he wrote to me the following letter:—

"*Andover, August* 1, 1819.

"Last Saturday I arrived at this beloved seminary after an absence of eight months. Reviewing the events of the season past, I am constrained to sing of the goodness of our heavenly Father. Although I have been obliged to endure opposition the most violent, and to languish with decaying health, yet the mercies of the Lord have been perpetual. The hearts of thousands have been opened to aid the children of Israel on their way to Zion.

"In this rebellious province of our blessed Lord, it is not strange that many refuse to pay tribute, and to acknowledge any connection with the kingdom of grace. Opposition must exist till this province is subdued; and I wonder that we dwell here with so little abuse, while our entire employment is to take away their gods and spoil their pleasures. O my brother, we live in a *wicked, blessed* world. Our high station demands the surrender of every talent, the energy of every faculty, the employment of every moment. Think of it, so much to be done in so short a period! The eternal destiny of millions of souls at stake, and yet death hastens on. Let us strive to-

gether for a larger share of the spirit of the prophets, apostles, and martyrs; for more ardent attachment to the best interests of Zion.

"With regard to a mission to Judea I find various opinions prevailing. The larger proportion of Christians cherish it with ardent prayer; others say 'the time is not come.' Shall we wait till there be an unanimous vote in christendom to send the gospel to the Jews? Then it is a decided fact that they are lost. Never will any (great) good be accomplished without opposition. And the present comparative indifference of the Christian community to the cause of missions abroad, is a most fatal obstacle to the progress of pure religion. My brother, I bless the Lord for the prospect of departing to the heathen world; I long to preach Christ to those who have not heard of him. As the time approaches my mind becomes more tranquil, my desire more ardent, my solicitude more intense. I beseech you by the love you bear to the blessed Redeemer, that you strive together with me in your prayers to God for me, that the service which I have for Jerusalem may be accepted of the saints.

"Adieu my brother and sister; I hope to see you before I go hence."

A letter to his parents.

"*Andover, Aug.* 5, 1819.

"My Dear Parents,—I am now very pleasantly situated in a little room in Dr. Porter's house, pursuing my preparatory studies in company with brother Fisk. My western mission, although long and laborious, has not essentially impaired my health. The continuance of my feeble health through so many trials and changes, demands peculiar acknowledgements to the Divine goodness. May not the same protecting care conduct us in safety through all the dangers and sufferings of our important under-

taking? With the presence of him, who has the hearts of all men in his hands, who can instruct, guide, protect, and comfort us. I love to reflect upon the promises, 'Lo, I am with you always—I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.' 'If God be for us, who can be against us?'

"The time of our departure is uncertain; but we must sail before December. We take passage for London; thence to Malta; thence to Joppa. We may not see Jerusalem till spring. As the period approaches, my anxiety to depart increases. It is the work assigned us, and why can we wish to delay? We might tarry till spring, but the expectation of the public forbids. O how unprepared! Pray for me. I look forward with trembling, yet with *confidence* in him who is able to give us wisdom. With Jonathan and his armour-bearer, God overthrew the armies of the Philistines: with two feeble men God can build up the walls of Jerusalem. Why then hesitate? Nothing is too hard for the Almighty. The way in which the Lord leads us is the *right* way. He will not suffer our feet to slide; our tears are noticed; our trials will not be too *many*, nor too *few*. O let the Lord reign? Let us go forth in his strength, ever desiring to depart and to be with Christ, which is far better. How short the passage *home!* Our work is closing, and a crown of glory will the Lord give to us, if faithful unto death. With much love to my dear parents."

An extract from a letter to his eldest brother of the same date.

"Home was never dearer than at present. Distance and cares cannot conquer the natural desire for the domestic fireside. I still contemplate the undertaking to which my life is devoted with the most perfect tranquillity. The object of doing good to those

who are perishing, is sufficient to dry every tear, and hush every sigh."

A letter to his mother.

"*Andover, August* 25, 1819.

"My Dear Mother,—I have this moment read again your interesting letter with emotions of gratitude and thanksgiving. It is inexpressibly comforting to me to know that *every* affliction has eventually procured the richest blessings from Heaven. Even in the hour of the greatest darkness we may rest with the utmost serenity upon the promise, 'That all things will work together for good to those that love God.' For wise purposes, our path to heaven must be thorny and dangerous. The ocean, which wafts us home, must be very tempestuous and raging; yet the Saviour now and then bestows a gleam of hope, a sip of pleasure, rather to *animate* than to *reward* his children. And how wisely is this vast system arranged so as to bring into exercise, and cherish every holy affection, and to display, at the same time, to the best advantage, the entire character of him who is the light of heaven. How could we ever know the value of *patience*, unless by affliction? How could we ever know the pleasure of *gratitude*, unless by being saved by grace? In these respects, the saints in glory will hold a station above the angels. They will cherish many affections which cannot exist in the breast of the holiest angel. Without any doubt, the recollection of our trials and temptations while below will increase our enjoyment in heaven, and cause us to raise still higher our anthems of redeeming love.

"All our *duties*, in this world, are designed for our discipline, and growth in grace. To *one* is assigned the charge of a *family*; to *another* the charge of a *people*. To one is given *prosperity*; to another *adversity*. *One* must work in a *distant* part of the vineyard; *an-*

other cultivate before his own *door*. Yet in all this vast variety of operations, there is one entire whole, one indissoluble chain, one system so regular and harmonious, as to include the motion of an atom, or the falling of a sparrow! Marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty!

"Let us then, my mother, comfort one another with these things. God designed to comfort his children with these reflections. The cup which our heavenly Father gives us, though mingled with wormwood and gall, shall we not drink it? There are no such bitter waters in heaven. With our tabernacles of clay, we resign every vestige of sin and pollution, and put on every thing which God approves,—which angels love.

"I never shall be able to compensate my parents for all their solicitude and prayers. How pleasant is the recollection of scenes of childhood, when with more than paternal tenderness, they shielded me from the arrows of the destroyer, taught me the utter ruin of my nature, and led me to him who can save to the uttermost. Even when sin was my chief delight, and my progress to destruction was rapid and determined, they did not permit me to sleep securely. The subjects which they introduced were made, I humbly trust, effectual even to my eternal salvation. I now thank you for this faithfulness, and trust that God will reward you with the abundant smiles of his face. To this same Saviour, whose blessings you have so frequently requested for me, I now would most cheerfully devote my future life. Though I wander upon distant shores, or suffer persecution for the name of Jesus, I may carry with me a '*testimony*,' of which man cannot deprive me; I may cherish near to my heart every object which is dear to the saint. The darkness will soon be over, and the light of eternal day open upon our departing souls. With such a hope, we may endure afflictions till our Lord permit us to rest with the blessed."

Extract from a letter to his sister and myself.

"*Andover, September* 11, 1819.

"My Dear Brother and Sister,—My health is as good as usual, and we pursue our studies without interruption. I think often of my friends; the parting will be painful, yet the separation will be short. How desirable to keep our *home* in view,—to seek a better and a heavenly country! I may sleep in Judea till the judgment; my friends sleep in America; but our *home* is the same,—our Saviour and Comforter are one. I wish to be crucified to every thing below, and determine to know nothing but Jesus Christ and him crucified. I can say I rejoice to go. Will not my friends rejoice with me?

"Within six weeks, twenty individuals, among whom are brothers Bingham and Thurston, members of this seminary, expect to sail for the isles of the sea."

Journal—"*Sept.* 11.—Was very much impressed with a passage in the 127th Psalm, 'It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows: for so he giveth his beloved sleep.' For some weeks past the studies preparatory to my mission have engaged my exclusive attention. Perhaps I have not regarded the sentiment of the text,—have not been sufficiently impressed with a view of my dependence,—studied too *much*, and prayed too *little*. Have I not neglected opportunities for social conversation, and given impressions unfavourable to the cause of Christ? This day I desire, by fasting and prayer, to examine my own heart; to confess my sins, and to seek the favour of my heavenly Father.

"*Question* 1. Why am I no more disposed to devotional conversation?

"Many opportunities have been presented. I have

visited families, walked with students, attended meetings, yet I do not recollect any instance in which I have refreshed the people of God, or affectionately warned the impenitent to fly to the Ark of safety. How many times might *one word* have been spoken; how many times I might have cast an arrow into the heart of some stupid sinner, and saved him from eternal burnings! But I say, *duty* requires to be silent, and prepare for the mission assigned me. True, I must give all diligence to my work, yet must I neglect to watch over my own soul, and the souls of those around me? Must I cease to pray and weep for those whom I shall see no more? Can I not pursue my studies one *part* of the day, and lead souls to heaven the *other*? Shall I not regret this exclusive solitude when it is too late to make restitution? Besides, will not this incessant application to study occasion indifference to the great interests of the church? Shall I not be less fervent, and less affected in view of the love of Christ? This declension demands special attention. I will go to God with my load of guilt; implore forgiveness and the direction of his Spirit.

"Let me begin to be faithful and holy. This day I design to converse with two of my impenitent friends and pray with them. In the morning, walk with another friend, who is preparing for public life; in the evening, walk with a brother in the seminary. The Lord sanctify this resolution. On Wednesday, to be at the meeting of the A. B. C. F. M. Let it be my prayer to-day that I may honour the cause of missions, and gain the confidence of those who seek the welfare of Zion; that I may be humble in my deportment, bold in every duty, and return with the approbation of the Head of the Church.

"*Question* 2. Why do I preach with so little zeal for the honour of God?

"Often I leave the pulpit with great sorrow and mortification. I lead in prayer, but saints are not

edified; I preach, but not as an ambassador of Jesus, not with the fervour and boldness of many of my brethren. If I speak of the love of Christ, my heart kindles not into a flame, my soul melts not at the mention of his name. Why this lamentable stupidity? Is it not because I seek the *approbation* of man, and that I neglect suitable preparation in secret? Do I go with prayer raising my heart to heaven? Am I constant in communing with God? Does he not leave me as a judgment for my sins? In this thing I am guilty. I will fast and pray.

"*Another request* is, that my last letters to my friends may be sanctified; that they may advance the cause of missions, and save souls from death.

"I have one more request, that I may possess more distinct views of the nature and design of the atonement. I would never mention the name of Jesus without weeping and without gratitude. I would dwell with him, converse with him, and sincerely obey his commands.

"*September* 19.—It is the Lord's day, the appointed season for the administration of the Lord's Supper; the last communion which we shall enjoy together. Our next assembling will be beyond the grave. I go forward and backward seeking him whom my soul loveth. I will be still, wait, hope, submit. This unsanctified heart is my continual sorrow. I pray to him who saved the dying thief, to him who can speak peace to the sinking soul.

"*September* 20.—I am deficient as to the disinterested motives which the Scriptures require; as to that *deep* and *permanent humility*, which is the ornament of the Christian character; as to that *tender regard for sinners*, which is the surest pledge of success. This day I desire to sit at the feet of Jesus, to contemplate his fulness, glory, and tender compassion. I would humbly request a more perfect knowledge of the way in which we are to walk; of the duties which we are to discharge. I would ask Jesus to

arm me for the field,—to shield me from the snares of the fowler,—to enable me to 'contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints.' My humble request shall be for the privilege of leading the children of Israel to the Saviour of the world. I will not forget to pray that the pride of my heart may be subdued; that the impurity of my affections may be washed away; and that my body and spirit may be a temple for the dwelling of the Holy Spirit."

On the 15th of October, Mr. Parsons attended at Boston the organization of the missionary church, which was destined to carry the light of salvation to the Sandwich Isles. The next day he commenced his last journey to Pittsfield, Vt. and arrived there on the Tuesday evening following. The latter part of the week was employed in visiting his friends in Middlebury, Shoreham, and places in the vicinity. On the Sabbath he preached in Hancock. Monday evening he preached a farewell sermon in Pittsfield. The same evening Mrs. M. and myself arrived, but not in season to hear the sermon. Tuesday evening a lecture was delivered to nearly the same audience that attended the preceding evening. Our Saviour's lamentation over Jerusalem was the theme. The speaker was not a little affected; but Mr. Parsons, who was a hearer, evinced in his countenance and whole demeanour a mind trusting in God, and a kind of sweet and sacred serenity, which may be easily conceived, but not easily described. Wednesday morning was the time of his final departure from the dearest spot on earth, his father's house. After reading the Scriptures, we *attempted* to sing a hymn, called "The Parting of Christian friends."

'Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in Christian love.'

Three times was prayer offered, and the missionary

commended to the Christian's God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. The supplication which Mr. Parsons offered on this interesting occasion will not soon be forgotten. It was evidently the devout breathing of a humble, affectionate, and submissive soul, *calmly* and cheerfully resigning itself, and the dearest earthly objects, into the hand of a loving and beloved Redeemer. The parting scene was mournfully delightful. The conflict of a mind made up in a great degree of tenderness and sensibility was doubtless great; and yet so far from swelling the tide of feeling on this occasion, Mr. Parsons was probably more composed than any one of his friends. Knowing the constitution of his own mind, he had dreaded this scene. But he was divinely supported; his soul was stayed on God. Grace triumphed over the tender sensibilities of nature. But I may say too much. Mr. Parsons was opposed to making ado at the departure of a missionary. Omitting, therefore, a number of incidents, which are remembered by his friends with melancholy pleasure, I would simply say, that throughout the whole of this interesting morning, he appeared like a person going *home.*

Extracts from a letter to his parents.

"*Boston, Saturday, October* 30, 1819.

"*Sabbath evening October* 31.—I preached this afternoon, and brother Fisk this evening. The Rev. Mr. Dwight says, 'there has not been so interesting a time in Boston for *fifty* years.' Bless the Lord. We are now to leave our native shores with the joyful expectation of saving some of the heathen. Rejoice, my parents, that I am counted worthy of this honour. In every thing the hand of God has been with us.

"*Tuesday morning.*—Early yesterday morning we were at the sea side, bade our friends *farewell*, and supposed that all was past. But the wind rose against us, and we yet linger upon our native shores. Dr.

Worcester has been a *father* to us; the Lord reward him. I find no reluctance to our work, but a growing desire to depart hence to the gentiles. May I be very humble and very prudent. We have letters of protection from the Secretary of the United States, from the Governor of Massachusetts, from the British, French, and Russian Consuls, who are now in Boston. We have also letters to many respectable merchants in Smyrna. I am affected in view of the peculiar kindness of our heavenly Father.

"I thank you, my dear parents, and beloved brother, for your deep concern for my best, my spiritual interests. In heaven may we meet to part no more."

Extract from a letter directed to me, dated

"*Boston, November* 2, 1819.

"Our accommodations are the best. Have no anxiety respecting us, but commend us to the great Head of the Church. Our sermons are to be printed. The Lord bless your dear children, and in due time send them to Jerusalem. In heaven there is no *farewell*."

Although Mr. Parsons and his beloved colleague expected to sail on Monday morning, yet it was so ordered, that they were permitted to attend the monthly concert of prayer in Park-Street Church, and a conference in Old South Church on Tuesday evening. These were precious seasons, and held in delightful remembrance.

Journal. "*November* 3.—At ten o'clock in the morning repaired to Central wharf, accompanied by the Rev. Mr. Bingham, the Rev. Mr. Dwight, and others. The time is now come—the long-desired and prayed-for day is come. We left our native shores to see them no more, perhaps, forever. My beloved country, the land of my birth, my education, my conversion to the truth,—*Farewell*."

From the manner in which Mr. Parsons here takes leave of his native land, it may be concluded that he had not wholly abandoned the idea of seeing it again. This was the fact. Though unreservedly devoted to his Redeemer as a foreign missionary for life, and though desirous, if it should be the will of God, of finding a sepulchre in the promised land; yet could a mission be established there, and permit a temporary absence, it was his intention to visit this country, thinking that such a measure might in a high degree subserve the interests of that mission, and of the cause of missions generally. We are confident that the mission to Western Asia cannot be safely left at present by any of the missionaries; but the period may arrive when a visit from one of them, without any essential detriment to the cause there, might gratify a kind of religious curiosity, arouse in many bosoms the sleeping spirit of benevolence, and do incalculable good. Doubtless reflections of this kind ought to be very cautiously made. But on this we may rely, if the friends of missions at home and abroad humbly and perseveringly wait on God, that he will direct to the best measures, and abundantly prosper his own work.

MEMOIR.

PART III.

CONTAINING AN ACCOUNT OF MR. PARSONS' VOYAGE TO SMYRNA—OF HIS MISSIONARY LABOURS IN ASIA MINOR AND JUDEA—AND OF HIS LAST SICKNESS AND DEATH.

On the day of his departure Mr. Parsons sent back the following note to his eldest brother :—

"*November* 3, 1819.—*At Sea.*—Sailed this morning; health good; weather favourable. I remember you, my dear brother, with great affection. May we be *one* in Christ. Let me tell you that I go with joy, without a moment's grief It is the Lord, (who comforts me,) and I rejoice. Farewell, my ever dear brother, farewell.

"Give my tender regards to brother L———, and give him the enclosed profile in remembrance of his beloved brother.

"In heaven there is no *farewell.*"

The following letter will show how Mr. Parsons and his beloved colleague spent their time, especially on the Sabbath, during their voyage to Malta.

"*At Sea, November* 7, 1819.

"MUCH RESPECTED PARENTS,—This is my first Sabbath on the Atlantic, and my first attempt at writing since our embarkation. About this hour our dear

friends in America are assembled for religious worship; and it is probable that my dear parents are in the house of God, and will remember their absent son, tossed upon the billows of the mighty deep, excluded from the delightful service of the sanctuary in a Christian land. It was our intention to assemble at the same hour, but we have not yet recovered from sea-sickness. Still two of us can have a little sanctuary, and obtain a blessing from the great Head of the Church. How precious is the promise, 'Lo, I am with you always.' Christ is with us to instruct, guide, and comfort by his special presence. With this assurance, we have nothing to fear. I know not why this honour should be conferred upon me, to be counted worthy to depart far hence to the gentiles, having the everlasting gospel to preach to those who sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death. If I had a thousand lives, they should all be devoted to this blessed employment. This morning I opened at the 129th hymn, 2d book, 'Saints, at your heavenly Father's word,' &c How comforting this must be to my parents. The wind is wafting me very rapidly towards the land of my destination.

"*November* 17.—Another Sabbath—a delightful day—commenced public worship between 11 and 12 o'clock; preached from 1 Tim. i. 15, 'This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.' The attention was very flattering. At 3 o'clock this afternoon went into the sailors' department, conversed and prayed with them. We have an important field for usefulness. Brother Fisk is still afflicted with sea-sickness, but there are no apprehensions of danger. Our voyage thus far has been pleasant.

"*November* 21.—Our third Sabbath. The week past has been favourable as to our studies, but our progress has been slow. As brother Fisk remains feeble, I preached again to the sailors. They gave

good attention; but like the impenitent in America, they will forget all these impressions, unles the Lord manifest his power and grace. I think much of my parents, and rejoice that their consolation is from above. The presence of the Divine Saviour is preferable to the society of earthly friends. The sum of all my desires is, to do the will of him who died for me, and through whose blood I hope for eternal life. I ask not for wealth nor for honour, but for the spirit of a martyr. I know that I am sent out as a lamb among wolves. I shall live in the midst of death, yet the Saviour will lead me in the right way to Canaan, even if I wander forty years in the wilderness.

"*Sabbath evening*, *November* 28.—Brother Fisk was able to preach to-day, although his health is feeble. With the exception of a very slight pain in my eyes, I never enjoyed my health better. We employ ourselves every day in reading, writing, and conversation. Sometimes I rise in the morning, and look towards America, not with a wish to return, but with a tender solicitude for my dearest earthly friends, with whom I have taken sweet counsel, and walked to the house of God. How many follow us with their prayers, and weep when they remember Jerusalem.

"*December* 26, *Malta Harbour*.—I preached to-day near the place where it is said St. Paul came to land after the shipwreck. O how his heart bled for sinners! On these shores he prayed for a guilty world. Eighteen centuries afterwards, missionaries, with the same message, endeavour to proclaim the Saviour who came into the world to save sinners. But O my leanness! The progress which I make towards heaven is very slow and imperceptible. How great my work; how weak my faith!"

Extracts from a letter to his eldest brother.

"*December* 30.—The weather is very warm. We sail soon for Smyrna. I know not the day of my

death. Let me ever live with my final departure in view. The year is now closing, and I most cordially wish you a happy *new*-year,—a year which you can review with pleasure,—a year devoted to God. I pray for you every morning in particular. I love to cherish the hope of your eternal salvation. How precious are your privileges; thousands and millions around us are without the Bible—without the Sabbath—without teachers. How great the condemnation of gospel sinners! Now, my brother, farewell. I love you, I pray for you, I hope to meet you in heaven."

A letter to myself and his sister.

"*November* 17, 1819.

"My Brother and My Sister,—My last visit to your house has left a very favourable impression on my mind; we took sweet counsel together in anticipation of an eternal union beyond the grave. I have every reason for gratitude that the separation was conducted upon Christian principles; we shall review the past with secret satisfaction. I have been two weeks at sea, and find as yet nothing very undesirable in a passage across the Atlantic. *Sleep* is quiet, even when the sea is raging; appetite much as usual. Have some hopes that my health will be confirmed, and a long life be devoted to the church. In view of my work, I find myself much disposed to desire *many* days, that I may witness the triumphs of the Redeemer. Although I am now fifteen hundred miles from Shoreham, I seem to be near you. The wind is wafting us away from America, but not from our *Bible*,—our *Saviour*,—our *heaven*. Sometimes our cabin resembles a paradise. I know not a *desire* to change my prospects.

"*November* 30.—As we approach the field of our mission, my solicitude increases. Satan's kingdom is very firmly established, and he will not be indifferent to our motions; yet he is in chains. Hitherto

he may come, and no farther. We must live in the midst of *death*, and shall need the remembrance of our Christian friends.

"*December* 12.—Yesterday we passed the Straits of Gibraltar, and are now sailing on the Mediterranean sea. We had a good view of the African shores, saw many villages and towers; discovered a very high mountain, which we called *Atlas*. The top was white with snow. This is the land which once nourished the church of God, and it has been blessed with the prayers and tears of many distinguished servants of Jesus. But how is the gold become dim, and the most fine gold changed! Here Satan rules over millions of miserable captives, and spreads far and wide his sceptre of cruelty and death. His reign is *short*. Some future missionaries who succeed us, will listen to the sound of the consecrated bell, and mingle their praises with the multitude, who go up to the house of God to worship.

"*December* 22.—At four o'clock this afternoon, we were refreshed by the appearing of Malta. A very kind Providence has accompanied us, and we desire to give thanks for these distinguished favours. The town of Valetta, (*December* 23, *nine o'olock in the morning*,) just opened to our view. Here we hope for many precious seasons of prayer and conversation with our fellow-labourers, (if we may claim the honour of classing ourselves with those whose piety and zeal are so conspicuous,) and we may rationally expect much advice and consolation. How important that our conversation and deportment should be such as becometh the gospel. At present, adieu.

"*December* 23, *Twelve o'clock*.—We are now passing in view of that harbour where it is said St. Paul landed after the shipwreck. Probably the place where the ship ran aground is very near us. O that the spirit of St. Paul might rest upon his unworthy successors!"

Some extracts from his journal will close the history of Mr. Parsons's voyage to Smyrna.

"*November* 16.—Read a few pages in Buchanan's Memoirs with great satisfaction. For maturity of judgment and meekness of spirit, he was worthy of the highest commendation. He gloried in nothing save in the cross of Christ. He could disarm the assasin, win to his favour the most bigoted pagan, and leave every where an impression favourable to Christianity. He could be familiar with a Brahmin, and still hold in utter abhorrence his detestable superstition. So far as he followed Christ, let his example be imitated, and may my sun, like his, set cloudless and serene.

November 18.—"Learning may give us *influence*; but piety *success*. The cultivation of personal piety claims the first attention of the missionary. Without it he may have the applause of men, but never the approbation of his Lord.

"*December* 19.—Brother Fisk preached on deck from Isaiah xiv. 18. The day was delightful, and the attention much as usual. At four o'clock I read to the sailors, and questioned each of them with regard to his hope of eternal life. No uneasiness or dissatisfaction was observed. Found much advantage in perusing 'Baxter's Saint's Rest.' Distinct views of heaven diffuse vigour and fortitude into every employment, and conduct the soul in the path of safety and happiness.

"*January* 1, 1820.—A new year. The past we would review with gratitude and with humiliation. The future is all unknown. How suitable to submit all questions respecting it to our heavenly Father. He directs, we follow. As we know not the day of our death, the injunction is never to be forgotten, '*watch* and *pray*.' If we are selected as the trophies of the king of terrors this year, may we die in the Lord, and may our works follow us."

While the vessel lay in the harbour of Malta, Messrs. Parsons and Fisk had several very pleasant interviews with the Rev. Mr. Jowett, Rev. Mr. Williamson, and Dr. Naudi By these gentlemen our missionaries were treated with respect and true Christian kindness, and received much instruction. Besides several valuable books presented to them, through the agency of the above named gentlemen, the Bible Society at Malta furnished our missionaries with a liberal supply of Greek and Italian Testaments. In addition to all the other expressions of friendship and fraternal love, Messrs. Parsons and Fisk were urgently invited to spend some months at Malta. "After serious consideration," says Mr. Parsons, "it was thought best, unless other motives present themselves, to proceed directly to Smyrna. The Lord our God go with us, and make our way pleasant and profitable."

After arriving at Smyrna, he wrote the following letter to his parents:—

"*Asia*, *Smyrna*, *January* 15, 1820.

"My Dear and much Beloved Parents,—After I was stationed in Smyrna harbour, I made haste for the letter which my mother gave me, and broke the seal with an aching heart. I read and wept. It was a long time before I could recover myself so as to proceed. O how grateful I must be for this cheerful surrender of a beloved son to the work of the Lord in a foreign land! Had my parents been unwilling, my affliction must have been vastly increased. I know not how I sustained the trial of separation. The whole is like a dream. As my day was, so was my strength. I hope that my parents will dismiss every anxiety with respect to me, and rather rejoice that I may convey to the heathen the word of eternal life. The struggles which I have with my own heart are often very severe. But our Saviour resisted even unto blood. I find the need of more exalted views of the atonement, more tender solicitude for the heathen,

more unshaken confidence in the 'great and precious promises.' My soul sometimes followeth hard after God. My prayer often is, 'Lord, show me thy glory,'—'Make all thy goodness to pass before me.' He is the best missionary who knows most of God; who communes most frequently with his high Captain and Redeemer. When you commend your absent Son to God, will it not be your earnest request that he may be dead to the world, that Christ may be to him all and in all. I love to follow my parents in all their various duties; going to the house of God,—visiting the sick and afflicted,—publishing the great truths of salvation to sinners, and comforting the people of God. May your lives be spared for a long time yet to come, and many souls yet be converted through your payers and faithfulness. As I shall write again within a month, I close, commending my dear parents to all the consolations of the Spirit of God."

A letter to a female friend in Wilmington, Mass.

"*Asia, Smyrna, January* 19, 1820.

"My Dear Sister,—Is it true that I am in Smyrna, or is it a dream? Am I separated from my beloved friends by a distance of more than five thousand miles, in a land of Mahomedans and of strangers; writing on the spot where stood a Christian church in the days of the apostles; where have been revivals, sermons, conferences, and prayer meetings; where have been disciplined for heaven many of the saints who now surround the throne of God? Yes it is true. Through the kind preservation of our heavenly Father, we have crossed the mighty deep, and are residing in safety in this interesting, yet dreary part of the world.

"On our passage to Smyrna, what an interesting portion of the world opened to our admiring curiosity! These seas have been honoured with the presence of Xerxes. Alexander, Demosthenes, Socrates, and

what is more, St. Paul, on his heavenly mission of subduing the world to the Prince of Peace. As we passed we could point to the west, and say, 'There the great Apostle of the Gentiles, on Mars-hill, declared to the pagan Athenians the God whom they ignorantly worshipped;' to the *east*, 'There the beloved disciple John was in the isle of Patmos for the testimony of Jesus;' to the north, 'There St. Paul and Silas sang praises to God in the prison of Philippi;' to the north-east, 'St. Paul kneeled down, and prayed with them all, and they all wept sore.' But I need not enlarge; may the Lord our Saviour return to bless and consecrate this degenerate section of our world. Here may the Son of David reign, and the holy angels unite again in the heavenly anthem, 'Glory to God in the highest.'"

A letter to his Mother.

"*Smyrna, January* 29, 1820.

"My Dear Mother,—I fear that your anxiety for me has been great, and that my absence has occasioned many hours of pain and sorrow. Perhaps some morning, looking towards the rising sun, my mother has said, O where is Levi! Perhaps he is tossed by the violence of the waves, or wanders an outcast upon some unfriendly shore; it may be he sleeps in death, to be seen no more until the sea give up her dead. No, my mother, dry your tears, Levi yet lives. It is he who now addresses you from the heathen world. Through the goodness of our blessed Redeemer, all is well; all is prosperity. We must be humble, for great are the tender mercies of the Lord for us.

"This is Saturday evening. In our retired little room we have had a precious season; we sang the 51st Psalm; prayed; confessed our faults one to another; renewed our covenant to be devoted to our work, and then bowed the knee in prayer again. O how

unprepared for this important station! O how much I need clearer views of the Saviour, more unshaken faith in the great and precious promises! It gives me great consolation to remember that my mother prays for me every day. You know not how much our mission may be advanced by interceding with him who hears prayer. I need many things, but especially humility. This is the brightest ornament of a missionary. Dr. Porter, with whom we resided while at Andover, said in a letter to us, 'Your usefulness, safety, and happiness, depend absolutely upon living near to God.' How valuable this instruction! I would place it upon the first page of every book which I read, repeat it the last thing at night, and the first in the morning.

"*Sabbath evening*, *January* 30.—This is our first Sabbath in Asia; it has been a good day; went to the house of God. 'I was glad when they said unto me, let us go into the house of God." The Rev. Mr. Williamson preached from Psalm xxvii. 8. He said the way to seek God was by devout secret prayer, by reading the Scriptures seriously and constantly, and by holy practice. It is good to hear of God, and to be exhorted to seek him. I desire, I mourn, and yet I find not him whom my soul loveth. Pray for me, my mother, that I may war a good warfare, and keep the faith.

"I will mention a few verses which I often repeat.

'In every joy that crowns my days,
In every pain I bear,
My heart shall find delight in praise,
Or seek relief in prayer.

Must I be carried to the skies
On flowery beds of ease,
While others fought to win the prize,
And sail'd through bloody seas?

Sure I must fight, if I would reign;
Increase my courage Lord;

I'll bear the toil, endure the pain,
Supported by thy word.

When that illustrious day shall rise,
And all the armies shine,
In robes of victory through the skies,
The *glory* shall be thine.'

"I often read your letters; may I hope to read others? Write faithfully; admonish me, and advise me. May the Lord our God continue to comfort and bless my dear mother, and make her last days the most useful and happy.

"O may we meet beyond the skies to part no more!

"Farewell, my beloved mother."

A letter to his Father.

"*Smyrna, February* 1, 1820.

"My Dear Father,—By observing the country, and the customs of the people, I have seen illustrated a number of passages of Scripture; see Jeremiah xiii. &c. The grave-yards in this country are of a dark green. In the clearest day there is darkness in the grave-yard. On the mountain, a little distance from the city, I passed by one of these large groves, and could not help exclaiming, 'This is the dark mountain; this is the shadow of death.' See Gen. xxiv. 11, and on; 'by a well of water.' While we were travelling in the fields, we came near to a well with a curb of white marble. The well was deep, and there was nothing to draw with. Around the well were several troughs of marble for camels to drink out of. We sat down on the well, and spake of our Saviour's journey to Samaria. Also see Ezekiel ix. 2, 'ink-horn by his side.' It is the custom of a certain class of men to carry an ink-horn, (or an ink-stand,) in a case about half a foot in length, and to place the case in their belt by their side. I have

seen a number of men thus walking the streets with an ink-horn by their sides.

"I think we may reside here with safety, and we may do a little towards reviving the work of the Lord in this city. So long as I can see the *Morning Star*, all is safe and pleasant. But much of the time I sit in darkness.

"I want to write to a number of our friends in Pittsfield, but every moment of time is occupied. How sweet were those seasons when we worshipped together. They will not forget to pray for me. If I cannot preach to them, I can remember them with affection. May the Lord our Saviour bless his church in Pittsfield, and add to it daily of such as shall be saved.

"I have many things to say, but must now defer them. The Lord be with you, my dear father, to comfort, support, and bless you. In heaven is no farewell."

Journal. "*January* 22, 1820.—Our voyage to a heathen land is now closed, and our work has commenced upon missionary ground. We have now the prospect of a retired and pleasant habitation. May it be in an eminent degree the habitation of holiness, the dwelling-place of the Most High. But how soon are we reminded of the uncertainty of life! The plague, that dreadful scourge, which sends vast multitudes into eternity, is beginning to rage in this city. Perhaps our heavenly Father has directed us here to die in a heathen land; and perhaps thousands may fall at our side, and no evil come near us. As duty evidently requires us to stay, it is pleasant to be here. I rejoice, yea, and I will rejoice, that God hath put it into my heart to regard the miserable heathen. O may I labour with diligence until my change come.

"*January* 25.—I have been reflecting upon the necessity of improving every moment to the best ad-

vantage. Let me keep in remembrance this fact, that a lost hour may indirectly ruin a soul, check the growth of piety, and incur the displeasure of God. The work of converting the world is a *great* work; there are but few labourers, and whole nations are going down to perdition. Jesus went about doing good; so must all his followers. If every Christian would improve his talents to the best purpose, how much might be done for the salvation of sinners! 'Lead me not into temptation.' I have thought much of this request in prayer. The most holy of the saints fall,—the most watchful are ensnared,—the most beloved sometimes occasion the deepest sorrow and shame. But God is a sure refuge,—an Almighty keeper. He knows our danger, and remembers that we are dust. Those who seek him find him,—those who trust in him he will keep. Can I have such a friend, such a protector, while wandering as a lamb among wolves?

"*February* 6.—Reminded of the request of American friends to pray for them this holy morning. At the throne of grace we are near; our desires, our sorrows, and our joys are one. Have been sensible of the value of contrition. This is a refuge from temptation; the source of all true comfort; the pledge of usefulness. This week I may die. Am I waiting for my Lord? Devotion, diligence in business, and watchfulness for the souls of men, are the only good evidences of preparation. After spending an hour in prayer for the Andover theological seminary, and American colleges and academies, went to the English chapel; the sermon good, the season interesting: the Lord be praised. From two o'clock to three devoted our time to thanksgiving for the repeated kindness of God to us during our whole lives. In our first prayer gave thanks for Christian parents, a Christian education, a Christian hope; for success in the ministry in America, for the blessings of our voyage, and for friends in Smyrna. In the second,

for so numerous a circle of Christian friends in America, for the benevolence of Christians, for the number of missionaries, for conversions among the heathen."

In the foregoing paragraph Mr. Parsons expressed his gratitude for friends in Smyrna. It was certainly a signal smile of Providence that our missionaries were so cordially received in a land of strangers; and that those who proffered their friendly assistance, never once withheld it. Among the number of their friends were the Rev. Mr Williamson, the English chaplain, who received them as brethren in Christ; Mr. Lee, who offered them the use of his valuable library; Mr. Werry, British consul; Mr. Vanlennep, and several others whose friendship it was important and honourable to enjoy.

Journal. "*February 7.*—Concert day; set it apart for humiliation, fasting, and prayer. The forenoon, devoted to private examination, was profitable. Three petitions were much on my mind. 1. For a broken heart. God dwells with the contrite spirit. Satan seeks in vain for admittance to so holy a place. Trials are improved; crosses taken up with cheerfulness by him who loathes himself, and repents in dust and ashes. 2. For clearer views of the Divine glory. A missionary should be enabled to say from his own experience, 'I know that my Redeemer liveth.' O that my soul might go out after God, and cry mightily for the manifestation of his presence! O that in this place I might every day receive encouragement and consolation. 3. For an affecting sense of the danger of souls among the heathen. In this great city we may do good by prayer. God knows how to subdue this people to himself. Would not St. Paul, were he here, find his spirit stirred within him? And would not the Saviour weep as he did over Jerusalem? Ardent piety raises the soul to heaven in supplication."

Copy of a letter to two ladies in Boston.

"*Symrna, February* 9, 1820.

"My Dear Sisters,—At length I am in Symrna, in a little retired room, pursuing studies preparatory to a mission to the Holy Land. After many years of anxious inquiry with regard to duty, the desire of my heart has been bestowed. I am on missionary ground among the heathen. Although the future is concealed in thick darkness, yet I cannot but rejoice that the *foundation* may be laid for the salvation of sinners in this far distant section of our world. The foundation is *all* which *we* may accomplish, but the work will not cease until the building is complete, and the top-stone laid with shoutings of grace, grace, unto it. A Christian who possesses the smallest share of the spirit of primitive saints, must weep when he beholds this great city given to idolatry and to the power of a false prophet. The inhabitants have been computed at one hundred and fifty thousand souls; most of these are dreaming of the sensual paradise of Mahomet! How *fatal* the dream! How certain their destruction! If Christians were as faithful, as holy, as zealous as they have engaged to be, would this great kingdom remain undisturbed? Would St. Paul, were he to revisit his own missionary ground, say nothing can be done—it is dangerous to oppose the progress of infidelity and of wickedness? O that the people, highly favoured of God, would not dispute upon the duty of sending the word of life to the heathen, until generation after generation pass to the grave, and with the rich man lift up their eyes being in torment!"

In one of his short tours into the country, Mr. Parsons visited a Greek church. He gives the following description of it:—"The building is of stone, enclosed by a high wall at a distance from the church.

Every thing within the enclosure was arranged in the neatest order. There were several small houses for the priests on the left as we entered, and a large reservoir of water with fish in it. Five priests accompanied us into the church, and with a smile bade us welcome. Lamps were burning in every quarter. The room for divine service is not large, without seats or pews. The pulpit is in the shape of a barrel, quite elevated and very small. The altar is concealed from the view of the assembly by a veil. We entered the holy of holies, where the sacrament is administered. Upon the table lay a Bible covered with a white cloth; there were pictures on every side. In front of the altar were two candles, about four inches in diameter." Having given the priest some tracts in modern Greek, and examined a few manuscripts, our missionaries departed. Perhaps the house just described was a tolerable specimen of the Greek houses of worship.

Journal—"*February* 18.—Of late God has been very gracious to me. Seasons for reading the Bible and for prayer have been unusually refreshing. It is good to be here for the purpose of praying for this great city and for this great empire. Within half an hour's walk are nearly two hundred thousand souls. While reading the Bible this morning, this passage arrested my attention, 'His commandments are not grievous.' The missionary under the severest affliction, the martyr at the stake, can say, 'His commandments are not grievous.'

"*Friday*, *February* 25.—Set apart this day for humiliation, fasting, and prayer. The following subjects are much on my mind. The revealed will of God with respect to the continuance and influence of false religion and infidelity. The best method of ascertaining the increase or decay of piety in my own heart. The views of inspired men respecting days of fasting.

"Upon the first particular I have recently read, with much interest, Dr. Scott's observations. The time of slaying the witnesses is not yet arrived, the servants of God still prophecy in sackcloth, the days of their mourning are continued. Admit this opinion, and what occasion to rejoice with trembling! The contest may be sharp and overwhelming, but the result may be comforting to the saints, and fatal to the cause of infidelity and paganism. The present benevolent efforts will greatly increase; revivals will be powerful and multiplied, and the Holy Scriptures will be extensively diffused; infidelity and error, perceiving the extremity of their cause, may arise with the rage of despair, lay waste the church of God, and triumph in the glory of their success.* The time will be short, the witnesses will rise, and the whole world yield to the dominion of Jesus. With God there is light, and in him is no darkness at all. O that I might sit at his feet, and behold him as the God of *providence*, carrying into execution his unchangeable purpose,—visiting a wicked world with fearful judgment, and yet keeping his children as in the hollow of his hand.

"Holy men of old fasted. David, after his fall, *fasted*, and went and lay all night on the ground. Jehosaphat, when a great army came against the nation, proclaimed a *fast* throughout all Judah, and all Judah stood still and saw the salvation of God. 2 Chron. xx. 3. Ezra *fasted* at the river Ahava when on his way from Babylon to Jerusalem, and the Lord was entreated of him. Ezra viii. Esther appointed a *fast* when she sought the salvation of her nation. Est. iv. Nehemiah *fasted* when he designed to build the walls of Jerusalem. Nehem. i. 4. Daniel was mourning and fasting three full weeks, when he sought to understand the vision. Daniel x. 3. Cornelius was fasting when the angel assured him that his prayers

* See Appendix.

and alms were had in remembrance before God. Ordinations were performed with fastings. Acts xiv. 23. St. Paul says of himself, 'in fastings often.' Fasting is a Divine institution. If Daniel, Ezra, and Nehemiah prayed and fasted for the prosperity of Jerusalem, ought not we who are much more feeble and much more ignorant? O may the spirit of Daniel rest upon, and make this day profitable to our souls!

"*Third.* Declension or progress in grace may be ascertained, perhaps, by an examination of the following questions:—

'1. Do you love to read the Scriptures because they are *pure*,—because they speak of God?

'2. Do you feel uneasiness and guilt when secret prayer is *formal*?

'3. Are you as much afraid of secret as of public offences?

'4. Can you receive a reproof with patience, and love the reprover for his faithfulness?

'5. With regard to the continuance of life, and with regard to the attainment of any earthly blessing, can you say, 'Father, thy will be done?'

"Read our Saviour's address to the twelve apostles, and implored a blessing upon the design of visiting Jerusalem.

"*February* 27.—The Lord's Day. I have been contemplating upon the blessedness of heaven. There will be no anxiety, no darkness, no temptation, no conflicts, no pride, no negligence, no weeping, to interrupt the joys of the heavenly world. The mind will be ever serene, active, humble, and fervent. There will be an existence without a blemish; a sea without a wave. Light without darkness, or a burning sun. Activity without ambition; honour without pride; devotion without weariness. Discoveries of Christ without a veil. A throne without a rival; a crown of glory which fadeth not away. A sceptre of righteousness; garments of salvation; the society of prophets, apostles, and martyrs. Anthems of un-

ceasing praise, saying, ' Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive riches, and glory, and blessing.' O is it not better to depart and be with Christ; to rest from all toil and suffering, than to remain a weary pilgrim in this dark and wicked world! For the ensuing week the following passage of Scripture is selected: ' Fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.' "

Through the instrumentality of the Rev. Mr. Williamson, and Messrs. Parsons and Fisk, a Bible Society was formed in Smyrna, on the 2d of March, 1820. " This small beginning," says Mr. Parsons, " demands gratitude and thanksgiving." I know little of the history of the institution. It has doubtless done some good already; and should Smyrna escape the ravages of war, and should Divine Providence smile upon this, as upon many kindred associations, it will, located in one of the most interesting places in all western Asia, be ' as life from the dead' to many who are sitting in darkness.

Journal—" *March* 4.—Rose early, and was refreshed by the morning devotions. My desires to God for our mission are, that we might look steadily to the throne of grace, and feel our weakness and our strength. These seasons of retirement are precious. My soul doth magnify the Lord. In our united prayers we pleaded for a spiritual mind, and for the prevalence of a spiritual religion. May we have the witness in ourselves that we please God.

" *Sabbath Morning*, *March* 5.—Still surrounded with the Divine goodness, and a partaker of the richest spiritual blessings. My tabernacle is in the flesh, my life a pilgrimage, my support faith, which is ' the evidence of things not seen.' So special and peculiar are the mercies of the Lord to me, I will speak of them in my conversation, in my letters, in my journal, and in my prayers. This day let me seek the spirit of heaven. *Evening*.—The services

of public worship were interesting. It is a joyful sound to hear of Jesus. For this week I select as a subject of meditation the dying prayer of our Saviour, 'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.' When contemplating the blindness and guilt of the Jews, I would plead, 'Father, forgive them.'

"*March* 6.—Concert day. Set it apart for fasting and prayer; and it has been a memorable day. After reading a chapter in Baxter, was much distressed in view of my unfaithfulness to my own dear brothers, and my numerous friends. God enabled me to plead for forgiveness with unusual fervency. I believe that the Holy Spirit made intercession for me. I was enabled likewise to pray for Zion, for ministers, churches, colleges, benevolent societies, and for missionaries, with unusual importunity.

"One thing is peculiar; as my spiritual enjoyment increases, my desire to live and to save sinners increases. I love to lay plans for usefulness for years to come. I find great delight in the prospect of usefulness in Judea, and at Scio, and in the hope of laying the foundation for the salvation of sinners when we are dead. If it be the will of God, I desire to visit America after the object of our tour shall in some measure be accomplished; not so much to see my friends, as to promote revivals of religion, and to extend the kingdom of Christ. If this be not the will of God, I often inquire, why these earnest desires? But this is not an infallible proof. God's ways are in the great deep.

"*March* 12.—What direction must be given to a stupid Christian? Must he be directed to read the Bible? It is to him without interest, without meaning. Must he enter his closet? The closet is dark, he cannot pray, his heart is hard, his affections languid, his desires sensual. What then can be done? Let him stand like the blind man begging. Let him cry day and night, 'Lord have mercy upon me.' Is

his stupidity great? His danger is great, and his need of immediate assistance great. A stupid Christian is the last person to be unalarmed. 'Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God.'"

We insert the following description of the manner in which Mr. Parsons found public worship conducted in the Greek church among the Jews, and the Catholics, which cannot fail to interest the reader:—

"*March* 22.—Accompanied Joan to the Greek church. Prayers had commenced. A few individuals were reading prayers aloud; the assembly crossing themselves, and bowing and kneeling without cessation. The archbishop and bishop stood near to the readers, dressed in black crape, with long and venerable beards, crossing themselves with the assembly. There were frequent instances of prostration. Several individuals, after crossing themselves, bowed the knee, and then the head, quite to the floor. This ceremony was performed eight or ten times in succession. About the middle of the service, a priest with a small vend of incense went into every part of the house, and filled the place with perfume. After about one hour, several priests entered chanting, and then the assembly was dismissed. The children flocked around the archbishop, and performed the religious ceremony of kissing his hand. After the priests had retired, part of the assembly remained, bowing, kissing the pictures, and performing other unmeaning ceremonies. There were many pictures in the house, but no images. The building is of stone, not large, with a gallery opposite the pulpit for the use of the women.

"*March* 25.—An aged Jew came near to our room for the purpose of conducting us to the synagogue. Service had commenced. A young Jew, Abraham, conducted us into the place of worship.

The chief priest was standing upon a platform raised about six feet above the floor, surrounded by ten or fifteen of the principal Jews, and engaged in an energetic discourse. When Abraham introduced us, the chief Rabbi inquired who we were? Abraham replied, two American priests, who were introduced to the house of Mr. Vanlennep. The Rabbi then bade us welcome, and proceeded in his discourse. He is a large man, of dark complexion, with a long venerable beard. He continued his discourse about half an hour after we entered. The people frequently assented, with an audible voice, to the sentiments of the speaker; and during the discourse there was a fixed attention. The assembly consisted of about 500 men; no women present. After the Rabbi had concluded his speech, the assembly, one by one, ascended the platform and kissed his hand; and then preparation was made for prayers. Each individual was furnished with a large camel's hair shawl, for the purpose of covering the head. They began their supplication by chanting, and by introducing the holy commandments, which were read with a loud voice, the people responding at regular intervals. At the close there was perfect silence, and the people stood and bowed again and again, acknowledging their reverence for the faith which they had heard. There were a number of beautiful children present, who might be taught the way of holiness. After service, shook hands with the Rabbi, and departed. O how much to be pitied are this unhappy people! The veil is yet upon their heart. But in the fulness of time they will be grafted into their own olive.

"*March* 31.—At 3 o'clock attended service in the imperial church. It is *holy Friday*. Soon after I entered, the priests and children around the altar began to chant prayers in the Latin language, and continued without cessation an hour and a half. The paintings on the side of the church were covered with black crape, and twenty or thirty tapers were

burning at the altar, which were extinguished one by one at different periods of the service. At the close of the prayers a company of boys, with little machines prepared for the purpose, raised a furious buzzing. At the same time others were striking upon the seats with canes. In a few moments a priest sprung forward, and with a large cane aimed a blow at the boys, and drove them from the house. As the boys left the church, they raised again a loud buzzing, by whirling a little wheel in the machine against a snapper. Then the priest, who was to be the preacher, dressed with a large homely great-coat, and girded with a cord, ascended the pulpit. His sermon was delivered in the Italian language. About five minutes after the discourse commenced, a large black cross was brought into the church, and placed by the altar. After a few minutes, the cross was taken from the church. The discourse was respecting Judas and the crucifixion. The preacher spake in a mourning weeping tone, often exclaiming, 'O Juda, O Juda, ungrateful wretch! O perfidious Jews! Not Christ but Barabbas; now Barabbas was a robber and an assassin. They cried, crucify him! crucify him!' Toward the close of the sermon an image of the Saviour on the cross, about one foot in length, with the appearance of blood running from his hands and side, was brought into the church and carried to the pulpit, The priest held it up to the view of the assembly, made bitter mournings before it, and after kissing its feet, it was taken away, and the sermon closed. After this, the service was very extraordinary. A multitude of candles were lighted in different parts of the house. The bishop, priests, and children, who attended at the altar, retired. Soon a grand procession, consisting of about two hundred people, entered, bearing lanterns, paintings, and images. The first painting, carried by a man whose face and head were covered, represented the Saviour bearing his cross. The second carried by a man with his head and face

concealed, represented the Saviour on the cross. The third represented the Saviour taken down and prepared for interment. The fourth was a canopy of red silk, extended by four pillars, supported by four individuals, under which walked the bishop, having a vessel, designed probably to keep the sacramental bread. As the paintings passed, the people appeared enthusiastic, and crowded forward either to kiss or touch the sacred representations; and many bowed and kissed the *sacred* garment of the bishop. After this we retired, satiated with such unmeaning ceremonies."

When the spirit of piety is departed from a people, the beautiful simplicity of Christian worship is lost; and the lamentable deficiency is often supplied by childish ornaments and useless ceremonies. Who can read the foregoing notices of the manner in which public worship is conducted by Catholics, Greeks, and Jews, without weeping over their blindness, and degradation? Surely the veil is upon the heart of Christians as well as Jews. But the Greeks, however degraded, are willing to receive the Scriptures. Who then, in this favoured land, where the Sun of Righteousness shines with unclouded splendour, will refuse his charities or his prayers for the inhabitants of those countries from which originally we received the Gospel?

Journal. "*Sabbath* 9.—

> 'The Spirit, like a peaceful dove,
> Flies from the realms of noise and strife.'

"Such is the tumult of the minds of many Christians, that the Holy Spirit cannot abide with them. They seek and struggle without once suspecting the cause of their spiritual barrenness. The room for the Holy Spirit is not prepared and purified; there is no expanding of the soul to receive his sacred

breathings. Usually there is much preparation in the mind before a special refreshing from on high. As it was with the Apostles, so it is with Christians when the Spirit moves upon the waters. All dissension, jealousy, and ambition are subdued. Every mind is tuned to the same string; every voice joins harmoniously in the same song of praise; the same desires and hopes are lighted up in the soul. All wait, hope, pray, rejoice, confess, as by the same Divine impression. Then enters the heavenly Comforter, takes up his abode in the soul, and cherishes every languid grace."

In his journal of the same date are the following devotional reflections:—"Have been reflecting upon the difficulties attending benevolent operations in Turkey. The enemy is strong and well fortified. Power is given to the False Prophet to make war with the saints. Christianity has degenerated into forms and ceremonies. The Holy Spirit has departed from these once sacred abodes of undefiled religion. What are *we* in such an empire? What is our strength before leviathan? But in view of all these difficulties, God has enabled me to say, with some confidence, '*conquest or death.*' I have enlisted into dangerous service of my own accord, in preference to many interesting solicitations. Woe is me if I ever leave this sacred calling; if I do not consecrate every faculty to my high profession. Ever may it be the languge of my heart, '*conquest or death.*'

April 28.—In the ninth chapter of Joshua two facts excited my attention. One is, Joshua made peace with the Gibeonites without asking counsel of the Lord. For this reason he was ensnared and overcome. Let me receive the instruction which it inculcates, and never lay any plan, nor engage in any enterprize, without previous prayer and humiliation before God. The *other* is, the sacred nature of a covenant. Israel would not destroy the Gibeonites,

for they feared the Lord, and said, 'Lest wrath come upon us.' This fear should exist in every breast. I will not do this or that, for I fear the Lord. I will not go with this company,—I will not follow such a custom, for it will displease the Lord. I will esteem it the highest attainment to be able *always* to please the Lord.

"*April* 30.—Have read this morning the history of Gideon, recorded in Judges, with unusual interest. At first he was an obscure man. The Lord called him to be a guide to his people. His faith was strong; his zeal ardent; his success remarkable. But he did not finish his work with all this glory; he is tempted, and yields to the temptation. Israel is seduced; God is dishonoured; Zion is laid waste, and Gideon descends to the grave with sorrow. We may learn from this, that good men are not safe unless upheld by an Almighty arm.

"*May* 14.—This is the first day of May with the Greeks (old style,) and a priest called for the purpose of blessing the house. With a bowl of holy water he sprinkled the different rooms, put a sponge of water to the lady's forehead, performed many ceremonies over the child, then crossed himself many times, and said in Greek, 'God be merciful—God be merciful.' During the voyage, and since our arrival, I have found but few opportunities for retirement. This is a great affliction, as there is danger of losing more in *one week* than can be gained in a *month*. There is much implied in our Saviour's injunction, 'What I say unto you, I say unto all, *watch*.'

"*May* 18.—We witnessed this afternoon a most affecting spectacle; a man, by the name of Thomas Pewett, recently a sailor in the British service, now by profession a Mahometan About three weeks since he left the vessel to which he belonged, and offered himself to the government of Smyrna to be made a Turk. The circumstances he related to us with much solicitude, and deep regret. He said, I had no

thought of becoming a Turk till that day. I had been drinking, and two of us agreed to leave the British service, and change our religion. We went to the Turkish officers, and just as we were upon the point of taking the vow, my companion left me; but I was determined not to yield. I declared my intention. A few sentences were then read to me in the Turkish language, to which I assented. My dress was changed, and I was pronounced a Turk. After this I saw my error, and endeavoured to escape; but my plan was discovered, and I was thrown into prison. From thence I was sent to this island. I am now destitute,—have no friends, and no home. Have you a wife? 'Yes, and one child and a mother; and I fear my conduct will occasion their death.' Do you believe in Mahomet? 'No, I do not; I believe that Jesus Christ is the Saviour of the world.' But you have denied him? 'Yes, in words, but not in my mind.' You must recollect that those who deny him before men will be denied by him in the day of judgment. He seemed anxious to know what to do. We told him that his situation was awful. We feel for you, but we cannot help you. Your sin is great; your danger is great. You must fly to the Saviour of sinners; you must repent of this your wickedness. Possibly the thoughts of your heart may be forgiven. To be despised of men is comparatively a small thing, but to be rejected in the great day will be an awful event. After considerable serious conversation he left us. The season was solemn. We beheld a man educated in the Christian religion, but one who had publicly denied the Lord that bought him; a man despised by Christians and infidels,—wretched in his life, with the fearful prospect of eternal perdition. We cry unto God for him. The mercy of God is everlasting."

It had occurred to the missionaries, that while engaged in the acquisition of modern Greek, they might

render essential service to the kingdom of Christ by printing and circulating religious tracts in that language. Accordingly, they obtained permission to print at the college press. This service appeared so important, and the Divine approbation so necessary, that the missionaries made their incipient efforts a subject of special prayer. In his journal for June 17, Mr. Parsons says, "We set apart the day for the cultivation of our own hearts; especially to implore a blessing upon the religious tract which we have now in the press. By the smiles of Providence we may do some good to Zion, while preparing for more extensive usefulness."

"*June* 24.—Devoted this day to private fasting and prayer in view of our numerous plans of doing good. 'Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain who build it.' Have been reflecting with unusual interest on the subject of redemption. How much it implies! In the first place place, all the interesting and astonishing events relating to the coming of the Lord Jesus into the world; his humility, compassion, sufferings, crucifixion, resurrection, ascension, intercession, second coming, and eternal glory. In consequence of the work of redemption, man is spared,—justice suspended,—the Holy Spirit descends,—the heart is renewed,—the soul is purified,—heaven begins below,—death is spoiled of his sting,—beggars are raised to a throne,—and a multitude are redeemed which no man can number. How many sinners have been sanctified and saved since Enoch walked with God! What a multitude now surround the throne! Not one profane person,—not one infidel,—not one unbeliever, in that blessed society! May I be found with Christ, when he cometh with ten thousand of his saints.

"*Sabbath*, *July* 9.—At an early hour went to the Greek church to witness the ceremonies of morning prayers. Nearly an hundred people were present. Two persons were reading or singing the service

The assembly crossed themselves, and often said, 'God be merciful.' Soon the priest made his appearance, dressed in white, with bushy locks and long beard. He read a little from the 'Collect,' then filled the house with incense; then brought forward two folio volumes, and placed one in the men's, the other in the women's department, that the people one by one might come forward and kiss the books. After this the communion was celebrated. But a few families came to the communion, as those only can come who have fasted two weeks, and made confession to the priests. The elements were brought forward in a small silver cup, covered with richly ornamented cloth. Each communicant came forward, bowed himself to the floor, and kissed the priest's hand. After this, putting a cloth, which was connected with the cup, under his chin, to prevent any of the sacred wine from falling to the floor, he received the sacrament from a spoon held by the priest. Parents brought their little children, and obliged them to receive the sacrament.

"A *pious* man is a *useful* man. A spirit of prayer has power with God; it may dispense blessings over the whole habitable world, and bring to repentance a multitude, which no man can number. Suppose that an infirm retired Christian possesses faith in prayer, and spends most of his time in intercession at the throne of grace. He prays for individuals, for families, for schools, for nations, for the world. The Lord hears, individuals are converted, families become pious, churches are enlarged, nations are blessed with the light of Divine truth. It is better to be *pious* than to be *great;* better to *pray* in *faith*, than to have the gift of tongues, or the understanding of an angel. Prayer is a mighty weapon. It must be more in use before the nations submit to Jesus. The Lord grant that the weapons of our warfare may be spiritual.

"*July* 18.—My birth day." Referring to his mission, he says, "Most cheerfully do I embark my all in this warfare. This morning I have been enabled

to say, in view of all future events, 'Father, as thou wilt.' My soul sickens at the mention of earthly joys. I do not long so much to depart from the world, as to live profitably in it; not so much to see the Saviour in heaven, as to see him on earth. I would see a society on earth resembling the society of heaven. I would witness nations laying their glory at thy feet, O Immanuel!

"*July* 25.—There are two facts which illustrate passages of Scripture; one is, in this country the roofs of houses are flat, and enclosed by a firm wall of considerable height. Peter went to the house-top to pray. The other is, there are stairs on the out-side of houses, so that a person may ascend and descend without going into the house. The command of Christ was, 'Let him which is on the house-top not come down to take any thing out of his house.'"

Extract of a letter to myself.

"*Scio*, (*Archipelago*,) *Sept.* 29, 1820.

"My Dear Brother,—I cannot refresh your heart with a list of converts, with an account of the extension of the kingdom of grace. Sometimes I bid a *long farewell* to such seasons as I enjoyed in Lewis, and in Troy, and endeavour to prepare my mind for solitude and silence. But still hope lurks around the heart, and the precious promises are an unfailing prop. It is one thing, my brother, to look at missions to the heathen from a Christian society, but it is quite another to submit to the hardships, and to bear the burdens of such a work. Of all persons he is the most miserable who learns too late that he is not a missionary at *heart*. In America there is a *charm* connected with the cause of missions; but among the heathen this charm is gone, and the soul seeks some other support in the hour of despondency. A firm and unshaken conviction in this truth, that the kingdom under the *whole* heaven is to be given

to Christ, and that no difficulties of any kind can for a moment retard the work of infinite grace, is the only rest for one who is banished from his country and friends. I say not this as a discouragement. Far from it. I trust that it will ever be a source of unfailing satisfaction that I entered into this field, so important to the souls of men."

Extracts from a letter to the Rev. Elisha Yale, of Johnstown, N. Y.

"*Scio*, (*Archipelago*,) *Sept.* 30, 1820.

"Dear Brother,—Is it not a fact that blessings have been multiplied at home, in some measure as Christians have laboured to send them abroad? For years past, *slothfulness* had been the prevailing fault in the American churches, and in consequence of this infidelity had assumed an alarming aspect. But since Christians are extending their charity and their prayers to a *world* that lieth in wickedness, truth has advanced with a rapid and irresistible progress. What reason for gratitude that so large a proportion of the professed people of God have taken the alarm, and are aiding forward, by every laudable exertion, the work of evangelizing the world!

"We have visited six monasteries in different parts of the island, in all of which are about seven hundred souls devoted to a monastic life. In each monastery we have left two copies of the New Testament, in the common dialect, and a considerable quantity of religious tracts. This day we visited a monastery, about six miles distant, and left one hundred and twelve tracts, and two Testaments. The president of the monastery informed us that there were three hundred and eighty monks, including forty priests, now residing there, but only one hundred were able to read their own language. We did hope to find much more information prevailing

among that class of people which retire from the world to enjoy their religion.

"The principal professor of the college in this city has greatly assisted us in our designs of benevolence. When we distributed tracts among five or six hundred youth, he gave a serious exhortation to each class, and urged the importance of an attentive perusal. 'This little book,' said he, 'relates to the blessed gospel, and is worthy of most serious attention. You must read it frequently, and understand as you read.' At the close, after all the scholars had received a tract, the professor exclaimed, with much animation, '*Glory to Christ.*' What, my brother, is the meaning of this?

"Several priests have been to our room, and purchased of us Greek Testaments. The joy which they expressed on the reception of this treasure was truly encouraging. This inquiry for the Holy Scriptures may lead to the commencement of a glorious revival of pure religion."

Journal. "*October* 14.—This has been a joyful day. We have distributed three hundred copies of a religious tract, called '*The End of Time.*' It was translated from an English tract which has been extensively circulated in America. We brought with us from Smyrna a few copies in Greek, and thought it duty to publish a second edition. We have now 5000 copies of this solemn exhortation to prepare to meet our God. These tracts given to five thousand souls may raise a multitude to the heavenly world. We shall not know, in this life, what good is accomplished; but when God makes up his last account,—when the great system of means is unfolded to the view of an assembled universe, then it may appear that this *tract* was a preacher of righteousness, and mighty through God to the pulling down of the strong holds of Satan's kingdom. It is

a *blessed promise*, that the word of God shall not return void. While we weep over the ruins which surround us, we may rejoice that soon the wilderness will blossom, and the barren places become a fruitful field. My soul doth magnify the Lord."

As we view our missionaries leaving Scio, where they had found a quiet and useful retreat for almost half a year, we cannot forget the calamities which have since befallen that delightful island. We would not affirm that the Sciotes were wise in rearing the standard of independence at so early a period of the Grecian struggle. If unwise, they certainly paid dearly for their folly. But whatever reflections any may indulge on this subject, it is plain that the barbarities of the Turks, and the miseries of the Greeks, were almost unparalleled in the history of guilt and woe. The Turks landed in Scio in April, 1822.—Before them it was the garden of Eden, behind them a desolate wilderness. The city of Scio was burnt and destroyed. The flourishing college there, the hope and ornament of modern Greece, was demolished; its library and philosophical apparatus given to the flames, and the professors and students slaughtered or driven into exile. Of the inhabitants, more than twenty-five thousand were put to the sword, burnt and drowned, or perished by fatigue, or by disease caught from the infection of the mangled carcasses that lay in the streets. More than forty-one thousand were sold for slaves. Many of these were ladies of distinction, who were dragged with ropes around their necks over the ashes and ruins of their own dwellings, and over the bodies of their slaughtered relatives, into transport ships, to be carried to Smyrna and elsewhere, and sold into hopeless bondage. Upwards of forty villages, and eighty-six churches, were consumed by the flames. A number of suffering, starving wretches fled to the mountains, and fifteen or twenty thousand escaped to some of the

neighbouring islands. The design and limits of this work will only permit us to take a glance at these miseries. We have no evidence that the Sciotes were greater sinners than other Greeks; but the query naturally arises, whether, if all the pious designs of our missionaries had been suitably encouraged, especially if there had been a cordial co-operation in the formation and support of a Bible Society among the Greeks in Scio, it might have proved the lengthening out of their prosperity? Doubtless reflections of this nature should be cautiously made; for the sword of war does sometimes destroy the most benevolent and useful institutions. It is hoped, however, that the warning of Providence in the destruction of Scio will not soon be lost; and that those communities, where nothing but the carcass of Christianity remains, will eventually have their eyes open to see the necessity of a reformation.

The following extract gives us a specimen of the hardships to which our missionaries were subjected in travelling. It is not to be wondered at that both fell a sacrifice to such exertions and privations.

"We set out from Smyrna, Wednesday morning, November 1st, with a guide and baggage horse. The second day, about nine o'clock, it began to rain, and at two in the afternoon the rain was violent. No tavern near us,—no shelter, except our umbrellas, from the storm. We rode till six o'clock in the evening, and then came to an old caravansary, where we expected a refreshing night. But far from this. After much waiting and pleading, an old dirty room, which had been used for a horse stable, without floor, chairs, table, or windows, was offered as the only shelter from the rain. A little fire was made, a mat spread upon the ground; our trunk served both for chairs and table, and an old pail, turned bottom upmost, for a candle stand. We ate a little fish which we had

brought with us, warmed our feet, and lay down upon our damp mattress, and endeavoured to rest after the excessive fatigues of the journey.

"While on our way from Pergamos to Thyatira, we experienced another trial. Our guide began to fear to travel as the evening approached; but it seemed to be duty to go on. We were told that a number of men had been murdered on that road; but we hoped to arrive before dark. When the sun set, the sky became cloudy, and the darkness was dreadful. In this situation, our guide lost his way, and what think you were our feelings? Soon, however, we were set right, and at seven o'clock entered the city of Thyatira. Went this morning (*November* 10) to view the only Greek church in this city. There is a form of godliness in Thyatira. On the Sabbath, a few assemble in the name of Christ. It is cheering to call to mind the years which are past, when he who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire addressed the saints of this city, and said, 'I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works, and the last to be more than the first.' The dust of those who were so highly commended slumbers here—angels watch it—soon it shall rise immortal, vigorous. Here Zion will be glorious. Some other missionaries will enter into the courts of God, and hold sweet counsel with those who love the Lord Jesus, and wait for his appearing.

"At Sardis our situation was somewhat peculiar. We arrived at half-past six in the evening at a house where we supposed a Christian lived, but we found no being except a solitary Turk. An attempt was made to get a room in a mill near by. Our guide knocked and called aloud at the door, till at last some one hallooed in a very unfriendly tone. By this time we flung ourselves upon some hemp under a hovel, and determined to spend the night as well as we could. Then the Turk opened the door, and invited us in beside a few coals of fire. We entered, and

sat upon a mat spread upon the ground. After tea, we lay down, but we were attacked on a new quarter. In the morning, my arms were as completely marked as ever was a man's face with the small-pox. This succession of evils affected my health, and I was seized with a severe illness, which lasted eight or ten days.."

For a long time Mr. Parsons had ardently desired to see that sacred territory where our Saviour was born, and crucified; where he arose, and whence he ascended into glory. For a considerable period before he left this country, he used in almost every prayer fervently to mention "the land where our Lord was crucified." The time had now arrived when it was deemed expedient that he should commence a voyage to that consecrated place. The following extracts from a letter to his parents will show the state of his mind on the eve of his departure :—

"*Smyrna, December* 2, 1820.

"Next Tuesday I expect to leave Smyrna for Jerusalem. My passage is engaged. I go in a Greek vessel with pilgrims; am to land at Joppa; from thence go with the pilgrims to Jerusalem. The opportunity is considered to be a good one; the path of duty seems to be plain. Perhaps I may do some good to the pilgrims who accompany me to the Holy Land.

"There has an important change taken place in our plans since I last wrote. The distribution of Bibles and tracts is the grand method of doing good in Turkey. By no other method can we so extensively prepare the way for building the walls of Zion. Precious opportunities have been given us to instruct a multitude of souls in this way. We feel unwilling that the work should stop. But if both of us go to Jerusalem *now*, our usefulness, it seems to us, must be greatly diminished. Some man must be *here* in order

to superintend the publication of religious tracts, and to supply agents with Bibles. We endeavoured to ask wisdom of God. And while we were deliberating, our friends in Smyrna offered us a room, and board free from expense, and also opened the chapel for us to preach on the Sabbath. Under these circumstances, we thought it to be duty for brother Fisk to remain in Smyrna this winter, and for me to go directly to Jerusalem.

"At first the thought of a separation from my only Christian brother gave me pain, like that which I felt the morning when I gave my parents the parting hand. But now all is tranquil. Every fear is gone; I look forward with the greatest composure. I feel satisfied that it is my duty to engage in this work. I am weak, and the work is arduous; but he is with me, I humbly hope, who is stronger than the strongest. The sea may be boisterous, and the storms be violent; but not a wave can move without permission, not a storm can beset us when Jesus says, '*peace be still.*' O my dear parents, there is something *substantial* in religion. God will not leave his children when they put their trust in him. He will be with them when far from friends, wandering in a strange land, and among a barbarous people."

"*Smyrna, Tuesday, December* 3.

"My books and clothes are now on board the ship. I leave Smyrna in a few hours; the wind is favourable, and my health good, praise the Lord! I have with me Bibles in *nine* different languages, and tracts four thousand or five thousand copies. These I hope to distribute to the pilgrims at Jerusalem. God has raised up many friends for me in Smyrna. We are bound to give thanks for it.

"At eight o'clock in the evening, on board the vessel. I have left Smyrna. I hope for a good voyage; but God will direct, and to the care of the di-

vine Saviour, I desire to commend both soul and body.

" *Farewell.* The Lord bless you, my dear parents."

Mr. Parsons left Smyrna with flattering prospects, considering the nature of his undertaking. Through the agency of the British Ambassador at Constantinople, he was furnished with a travelling firman from the Grand Seignior; also with a letter of introduction from the Rev. Mr. Connor to the president of the Greek convent in Jerusalem; letters from the English and Russian consuls in Smyrna to their vice-consuls in Jaffa and other places; and a letter of recommendation from an Armenian merchant to an Armenian in Jaffa, and another in Jerusalem. Mr. Vanlennep, who had been invariably a cordial and valuable friend to our missionaries, obtained the letter last mentioned. When the Armenian brought the letter, he gave Mr. Parsons two boxes of honey, requesting that he would pray for him at Jerusalem, supposing that prayers offered at Jerusalem were more acceptable and efficacious than those offered elsewhere. He was furnished with a faithful servant, who was also his interpreter. Mr. Parsons sailed Tuesday night or Wednesday morning. The following extracts from letters to Mr. Fisk will furnish some account of a part of the voyage :—

" *Scio, December* 11.

" Met Professor Bambas with open arms. He hung on my neck not much less than half an hour. He told George that he must reverence me as his father, for I was going a great way off. The superior of the school came in and fell on my neck with the affection of a father. In one respect I like this. It looks favourable to the cause of Bibles and tracts. Professor B. absolutely forbade my return to the ship,

as I had determined, and said, 'here read or write as you please,' at any rate stay with me. I had an excellent interview with him, and when I told him of the revival in Stockbridge, Vt. he wept, and said, 'the Spirit of God makes men good.' I also told him respecting the revival on board the missionary ship. Farewell."

Extracts from a letter to his parents.

"*Patara*, (*Asia Minor*,) *January* 1, 1821.

"It is the morning of a new year. I unite with the other members of the family in the wish that my dear parents may enjoy a *happy new year*. Most gladly would I enter that happy dwelling where I have passed the most profitable moments of my life, and comfort my parents by relating to them all the merciful dealings of our heavenly Father. In the midst of danger, temptations, and sickness, the Lord has been my refuge and protector. Underneath me have been arms of everlasting love. I would tell them how God hath prospered us in our mission, by permitting us to diffuse among the destitute the blessed truths of his holy word. But although I cannot return to your fireside, yet when you receive this letter, your souls will magnify the Lord for his great goodness.

"I have small apartments in the vessel where, with my interpreter, I enjoy much tranquillity and retirement. I read to him in Greek every day, and he sometimes asks me interesting questions. He inquired if all the people who were alive when Christ ascended to judgment, would *die?* For an answer I read to him 1 Thess. iv. 17. He then inquired if the world would be entirely burnt up. I replied in Scripture language, 'The heavens and the earth which are now, by the same word are kept in store reserved unto *fire against* the day of judgment.'

"If you will open the Testament and read from

Acts xx. 14, to Acts xxi. 3, you will trace out almost precisely the course which we have pursued. We sailed near to '*Mytilene*,' and sailed thence, and came the next day to '*Chios*,'—from thence we came near to '*Samos*,' and to '*Trogyllium*.' where St. Paul tarried a while. The next day we passed at a little distance from the shores of '*Miletus*,' where Paul kneeled down and prayed with the elders of the church at Ephesus; towards evening of the same day we passed by the isle of '*Patmos*,' where St. John, the beloved disciple was in banishment for the testimony of Jesus. From thence we came near to '*Coos*,' and the day following we came to '*Rhodes*.' At Rhodes we tarried six days, as the south wind rose against us. On Thursday last, we set sail early in the morning from Rhodes, and the next day came to a harbour near to '*Patara*,' where we were detained several days, as sailing was dangerous. But, my dear parents, a visit to these places, interesting indeed to every Christian, may excite momentary joy without producing *devotion* in the heart. I have seen pilgrims so frequently mistake mere *animal* sensation for true piety, that I am almost disposed to discourage entirely this curiosity among Christians. What if a man at the sight of Smyrna or Patmos is overcome with weeping, is he on this account more acceptable to God?

"No place on earth is so interesting to angels and glorified spirits as the *closet*, where is offered, morning and evening, the sacrifice of a broken heart and contrite spirit. To be a devotional spectator of one *revival* of religion will impart infinitely more enjoyment to the mind than to see all the places where lived and died prophets, apostles, and martyrs.

"That this year may be a year of great comfort to my parents, will ever be the prayer of their absent son."

The voyage was long and dreary. Frequently

they were driven backward by head winds and tempestuous weather, and compelled to stop unexpectedly long at the islands which they passed. Mr. Parsons' grand object was usefulness in the Holy Land; but he was not inactive during the passage. While sailing, he considered himself a missionary to the pilgrims; and on the land, he felt that he ought to be, and he truly was, a messenger of mercy to those who were sitting in darkness. While passing the ancient Miletus, he read to the pilgrims the twentieth chapter of Acts, which contains the affecting account of Paul's farewell interview with the Ephesian elders; and while passing Patmos, our Saviour's addresses to the seven churches of Asia. The pilgrims having never before read nor heard these epistles in their own language, listened with fixed attention. At Rhodes, they tarried several days. Here Mr. Parsons became acquainted with the English consul, the bishop, and some Greek clergymen of distinction. To the bishop he gave a number of tracts, and sent one hundred and fifty more for the priests and schools. The bishop very definitely expressed his approbation of the tracts, and his gratitude for the favour. Mr. Parsons visited a synagogue, a Jewish school, and a monastery, where tracts were received for distribution with ardent expressions of gratitude.

In the harbour, and in the village of Castello Rosso, he distributed about two hundred tracts, and sold ten New Testaments in modern Greek. One morning as he passed through the village, a multitude thronged the streets, crying aloud, "Sir, will you give me a tract?" "In no place," he remarks "have I seen a greater desire to read the word of God."

A letter to a relative.

"*Cyprus, February* 5, 1821.

"Dear Mrs. C.,—My Parents informed me in a letter recently received, that God is still afflicting you

by withholding from you the light of his countenance. As I know something of the *bitterness* of such afflictions, your situation has made a peculiar impression upon my mind. No sorrow I am sure, is to be compared with that which proceeds from the hidings of the Divine presence. It strikes at the foundation of *every* comfort, and leaves the soul wretched without any support on earth, or in *heaven*. In temporal affliction we lose, perhaps, *one* of our numerous friends, but in afflictions of the mind, we lose the Friend of Friends, our Father, our Saviour, our all. In one case, we lose a little perishable dust; in the other, a treasure in the heavens, riches which endure to eternal life. A Christian, walking in darkness, usually *sees* the great and precious promises, but has not strength to *rest* upon them—he has no doubt with regard to the *rectitude* of the Divine government, but yet this reflection gives him no joy—he knows that the fountain open for sinners is full, and overfloweth, yet he cannot wash and be clean. He goes to the place where once he enjoyed the Divine presence, but *God* is not there. He sits in the sanctuary, but it is not the gate of heaven. All is in darkness, and gloom. No person has higher claims upon the prayers, the *fervent* prayers of God's children, than that one who goeth backward and forward, and findeth not him whom his soul loveth.

"I can say little, my dear cousin, to relieve the sorrows of your mind. In this state, in a very *special* manner, the great Physician is *God*. He giveth, and taketh away, woundeth, and healeth, but tells us not the reason why. The whole system of Divine providence is a *mystery*—darkness, and clouds are around about him—If I were to suggest any thing as calculated to afford relief, it would be, *keep your mind fixed upon the goodness of God*. 'From my heavenly Father I receive my daily food, habitation, family; Christian friends; the Holy Bible; the blessed Sabbath; the news of salvation. Why was not I left destitute to

beg from house to house, deprived of every earthly comfort? Why was I not destined to worship the gods of the pagans, to wear out my life in cruel torturings? How few of the many millions of beings now on the earth are so highly favoured as I am! They have souls as well as I! They need a Saviour as well as others! It is goodness, it is *all* goodness, unmerited, free, rich, sovereign, goodness!' Reflections of this kind, if they do not afford *comfort*, may keep you from the snares of Satan. It is true that Satan worries those he can't devour. He would persuade them that God is *partial*, 'he hears the prayers of others, but casts theirs behind his back, or that he is *indifferent* to their sighing.' Such feelings often lurk secretly in the mind, and grieve the Holy Spirit.

"As another method, I would say, *wait on the Lord.* He may be dealing with you with the affection of a Father; leading you through a wilderness, to make Canaan more delightful; hiding his face to make you pray, and weep, and wrestle. Wait to the end; for then it will be manifest to you, and to the universe, that as a Father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them who fear him."

The following extracts from a letter to the corresponding secretary of the A. B. C. F. M. dated Cyprus, February 7, 1821, contain an account of his missionary labours on that island, and mention several interesting facts respecting that once favoured and delightful place. "At the harbour of Baffa (anciently Paphos) I left the vessel and proceeded by land forty miles to Limesol, for the purpose of distributing Testaments and tracts. The first place which I visited was Paphos. The priests immediately conducted me to the church, where *they say* St. Paul preached the gospel; from thence to the hall, where he was condemned; and to the pillar, where he was bound, and received 'forty stripes save one.' It was truly affecting to

see so many churches destroyed; some used for stables, others for baths, others completely in ruins. Of three hundred and sixty-five churches, once the glory of Paphos, only four or five now remain. Twenty-five or thirty miserable huts are all that remain of the once most distinguished city of Cyprus.

"From this place I went to the house of a Greek bishop, in a village two or three miles from the shore. There I was received with the utmost cordiality; and all his proceedings were marked with great seriousness and dignity. He highly approved of the tracts which I brought with me, and engaged to distribute them among his people. Under his government are two hundred churches, but only fifty are now open for religious services. On the way to Limesol, spent one night in a village called Pissouri. The priest of the village purchased a Testament, and received tracts for distribution."

Extract from a letter of Mr. Parsons to Mr. Fisk.

"*Jaffa, February* 10, 1821.

"Dear Brother Fisk,—This morning I became acquainted with two English travellers, both from Jerusalem. They gave a most dismal picture of Jerusalem. A new governor had just arrived, and the country was growing into a state of rebellion. They assured me that there was the greatest danger on the way, and that the number of pilgrims would afford no security. I felt my heart palpitate while they related these horrid facts. But without doubt it is duty to proceed; and while on the way, Christians will be wrestling in prayer to God for me. 'Environed with Omnipotence, what foe can e'er prevail?' O my brother, I desire greatly to see you, and to have the assistance of your counsels and of your prayers. I know you pray much for me. How can I stand before this great multitude? But the battle is the Lord's. On Monday I hope to set for-

ward for Jerusalem, and if prospered shall be in the holy city on Tuesday evening.

" The field is large, and ready for labourers. Jesus Christ holds an undisputed title to this land consecrated with his blood. When he bids his servants go forward and take it, earth and hell unite their forces in vain."

Journal. " *February* 12.—The English consul at Jaffa had the goodness to procure for me a letter to the governor of Rama, soliciting a guard to accompany me to Jerusalem. But the president presented the letter to the governor, and made an apology for not accepting a guard, as I was already provided with an interpreter.

" Saturday morning at six o'clock, left Rama; rode three hours and a half through a beautiful plain, and from thence began to ascend the mountains of Judea. The road became stony, narrow, and winding among high and barren mountains. Every few miles we were called upon for taxes; but in consequence of a letter from the Russian consul, we passed without any expense. At twelve o'clock, came to the village of Aboo Gosh, who is noted for his oppression of the pilgrims. Aboo Gosh stood at the place of demanding customs, and said, ' You have nothing to pay; you may pass when you please.' He requested me to take some refreshment; but as there was a prospect of rain, I could not accept of his offer. Two hours after this, we came near to the place where, it is said, David slew Goliath. We were shown also the house in which, tradition says, John the Baptist was born. The monastery near the spot belongs to the Catholics. From this we began to ascend a high mountain; and at twenty-five minutes past four o'clock, my guide exclaimed, ' To oros tōn elaiōn !' (the Mount of Olives,) and in just half an hour we entered, by Jaffa gate, the holy city.

" Soon after passing the gate, we turned to the

north, and in a few minutes arrived at the house of Procopius, to whom I had letters of introduction. The servant at the door informed us, that he was in the church for evening prayers. Without a moment's delay I hastened thither, to unite with the professed followers of Christ upon Mount Calvary, and to render thanks to God for the happy termination of my voyage to the holy city. The church is but a few steps from the place where, it is supposed, stood the cross. On entering, I was not a little surprised to find it so richly and neatly furnished. It is called the Church of St. Constantine, and is the place to which all the bishops, (five in number) with their numerous attendants, resort for morning and evening service. Every thing was conducted with a pleasing stillness and regularity, becoming so holy a place.

" After service of thirty minutes, I returned and presented my letters to Procopius. Conversation was directed to the exertions which the Protestants are making to promote the diffusion of the Holy Scriptures. They replied, ' We believe the Protestants to be our friends.' In a few moments, I was conducted to the room, which had been put in readiness for me, by the request of the Russian consul. It is near to the holy sepulchre, and contains many convenient apartments. My trunks had arrived in safety. In the evening, we read from the Greek Testament the account of our Saviour's sufferings and death, and endeavoured to consecrate our rooms to him, who here gave his life for the world.

" *February* 21.—Went to the church of the holy sepulchre. The gate fronts the south, and is strictly guarded by Turks without, and Greeks within. No pilgrim, a subject of the Grand Seignior, can enter without paying a *para*, a trifle to be sure ; but when multiplied by the hundreds of times at which each pilgrim enters in the course of three months, the amount becomes a large sum. To prevent confusion, it is necessary to observe the difference between the

church of the holy sepulchre, and the holy sepulchre *itself;* the one embracing all the apartments belonging to the different denominations of Christians; the other being only a monument erected over the tomb of our Saviour, and held in equal reverence by the various denominations of Christians who frequent it. The *tomb* may be called the centre of the church of the holy sepulchre, near to which may be heard the prayers of Christians in ancient Greek, in Latin, Armenian, Arabic, and Syriac.

"Entered the gate of the church of the holy sepulchre amid a crowd of pilgrims. The first object which attracted my attention was the *stone of unction*, venerated as the spot where the body of our Lord was anointed for burial. The stone is thirty-one feet directly in front of the gate: is eight feet in length, and two feet two inches in breadth. Several large candles are kept standing at each end, and over it are suspended several silver lamps. The pilgrims all bow, and, after making the sign of the cross, kiss the sacred stone.

"Leaving the stone of unction, we were conducted to the holy sepulchre. It is distant from the stone of unction sixty-three feet, under the centre of a large dome. The monument erected over the tomb contains two apartments. In the first is the stone where, it is said, the angel made his appearance to Mary; in the other is the holy tomb. The outside of the monument is twenty-nine feet in length, eighteen and a half in breadth. I waited some time for the pilgrims to withdraw. While standing there, a pilgrim entered, and at the sight of the tomb wept and sobbed as over the grave of a parent.

"Seventy-three feet from the holy sepulchre we came to the chapel of apparition, in which a few Catholics were engaged in evening service. The music, for softness and solemnity, exceeded any thing I have heard in Asia. From the chapel we returned to the holy sepulchre, and passing through the Greek

church, ascended Mount Calvary. It is sixteen feet above the level of the tomb. I stooped down to look into the hole in which, it is supposed, stood the cross; below which is a fissure in the rock, made, it is believed, when Christ our Lord bowed his head and gave up the ghost.

"*February 22.*—In the afternoon, the interpreter of the Russian consul accompanied me to Mount Olivet. Left the city by Damascus gate, and, turning eastward, we passed near the cave in which, tradition says, Jeremiah wrote his Lamentations. 'All ye that pass by, behold and see if there is any sorrow like unto my sorrow.' The cave is large, and is held in high veneration. Passing the north-east corner of the city, we descended to the brook Kedron. The bed of the stream was perfectly dry, notwithstanding the great rains. On our left, saw the church erected over the grave of the Virgin Mary; on our right, the garden of Gethsemane.

"In fifteen or twenty minutes reached the summit of the Mount of Olives. Here we had a delightful view of the city, and also of the Dead Sea. Perhaps no place in the world commands a finer prospect, or is associated with events more sacred and sublime. 'David went up by the ascent of Mount Olivet, and wept as he went up, and had his head covered, and he went barefoot.' On the east side of it, our blessed Saviour raised Lazarus from the grave; and, on the west, he endured the agony of Gethsemane. Here he beheld the city, and wept over it. From this mount he was, at one time, conducted to Jerusalem with shoutings of 'Hosanna to the Son of David;' and, at another, with the cry of 'Crucify him! crucify him!' From this spot he gave his last commission, '*Go into all the world, and preach the Gospel,*' and then ascended, and 'sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.'

"Descending the Mount of Olives, we passed into the valley of Jehoshaphat, to the pool of Siloam

Here the blind man, at the command of Jesus, washed and returned seeing. The pool is at the foot of Mount Moriah, on the south side. We descended a handsome flight of steps to the water. It is visited every day by pilgrims of every denomination. I perceived nothing unusual in the taste of the water.

"From Siloam, directing our course southward, we came to the tree where, *it is said*, Isaiah was sawn asunder for his faithful exhortations and reproofs. The tree is securely guarded by a high wall, to prevent the injuries it would receive from pilgrims.

"From this we began to ascend Mount Zion. We passed through fields of grain, which reminded us, at every step, of the awful prediction, 'Mount Zion shall be ploughed like a field.' On the summit is a mosque, erected over the tombs of David, and of the kings of Israel; and an Armenian church, *said to be* the ruins of the house of Caiaphas, the high-priest.

"Mount Zion, on three sides, is strongly fortified by nature. This agrees precisely with the description given of it in the Scripture, 'Nevertheless, David took the *stronghold* of Zion, the same is the city of David.' At the foot of it, on the west, are the ruins of the pool of Beersheba; on the south, the valley of the son of Hinnom, called also Tophet, and the valley of slaughter. (Jer. xix. 6.) Here the children of Israel caused their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire to Moloch, 2 Kings xxiii. 10; and in this place Jeremiah denounced the dreadful curse, 'Behold, I will bring evil upon this place, the which, whosoever heareth, his ears shall tingle.'

"On the south side of Mount Zion are the ruins of the old wall, supposed to be the one repaired by Nehemiah. Here may be seen to the best advantage the site of Solomon's temple, the Mount of Olives, and the plains and mountains of Judea. This delightful prospect, in connection with its spiritual privileges, led David to sing, 'Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth is Mount Zion.' Returned to the city at sunset.

"A priest invited me to visit some interesting objects in the city. We passed the street called *Via Dolorosa*, through which our Saviour bore his cross to Calvary; were shown the house of St. John the beloved disciple; the hall where the Saviour was arraigned before Pilate; the pool of Bethesda, near St. Stephen's gate; the arch where, it is said, Pilate cried, 'Behold the man!' the place where Stephen was stoned, having his eyes fixed on the visions of God; the place in the garden, where our Saviour, being in an agony, prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was, as it were, great drops of blood falling down to the ground. St. John has marked the site of the garden very particularly, 'He went forth with his disciples *over* the brook Kedron.' There is but one spot over the brook Kedron convenient for a garden. This garden had been consecrated by the many prayers, and by the blood of our Divine Saviour. 'For Jesus oftentimes resorted thither with his disciples.' It is still occupied as a garden, and contains several large olive trees.

"*February* 27.—Received a letter from the president of the Greek monastery at Rama, expressing his thanks for the tracts which I sent him to be distributed among the pilgrims.

"*March* 3.—Gave to Procopius one hundred tracts to be distributed among the priests and pilgrims. Conversed a long time with a priest respecting the nature of the new birth. He said it was baptism. 'When children are baptised, they are renewed, as it respects Adam's transgression; but if they afterwards sin, they must be punished.' This, so far as I can learn, is the prevailing sentiment among the Greeks. They can give no other account of the new heart.

"*March* 19.—Visited Procopius. He gave it as his opinion, that there are in Jerusalem ten thousand Jews and two thousand Christians. Twenty-one pilgrims arrived from Smyrna. An Armenian of distinction informed me that in Jerusalem there are

sixty families of Armenians, and that in Palestine are only four Armenian monasteries, viz. one in Jerusalem, one in Bethlehem, one in Rama, and one in Jaffa. There is also an Armenian church on Mount Zion, without the city.

"*March* 22.—In the morning, one of the pilgrims,* with whom I read the Scriptures almost every day while on the passage, came to my room and read with me several chapters. The progress which he has made in reading and in knowledge, is a rich compensation for all the trouble of teaching him. He often stops to tell me, in other words, the story he has read; and remarks upon the importance of living according to the Scriptures. He is never weary, but, at the close of one chapter, he says, with a smile, 'shall we read another?' When he passes me in the street, he expresses the affection of a brother, and at the same time looks at me as his instructor. The effect upon his life has been most salutary. He says, that he shall read the Testament every day as long as he lives. He is soon to return to his country, more than a thousand miles from Jerusalem, and my opportunities to visit and instruct him must cease. But he will carry with him the Holy Bible as his guide, and he will not soon forget the past interesting scenes. I do indulge in the secret hope, not that he is already converted, but that impressions have been made, which by the blessing of the Holy Spirit, will result in a saving acquaintance with the word of God, and in final admittance into heaven. With regard to the future, we can make no certain calculations. For the past I feel bound to give thanks to God.

"Four persons have been to my room to read the

* This pilgrim was an Armenian, to whom Mr. P. on the voyage gave an Armenian Testament. This very interesting young man frequently on board read aloud to his fellow pilgrims.

Scriptures to-day. The priests encourage me in this employment. If, then, a missionary can reside here with no other employment than to read the Scriptures with pilgrims, not uttering a word respecting Catholics, Greeks, or Turks, a great work might be accomplished,—a work which would impart infinite joy to the friends of this mission, and guide many souls to eternal life. From the observations I have made, I am led to believe that reading the Scriptures is one of the most effectual methods to diffuse the spirit of piety,—a method to which God has often added a peculiar blessing."

One object of Mr. Parsons's visit to Jerusalem was to distribute religious tracts. Referring to this, he says, after mentioning other monasteries which he visited :—" At the *thirteenth*, that of St. Ithemius, left thirty tracts. Here terminated our tour. Have now visited thirteen Greek monasteries, one Catholic, one Armenian, one Syrian, and one Coptic, within the walls of Jerusalem. Distributed in all, including the church of St. Constantine, one thousand tracts. These tracts are to be widely dispersed, and perhaps read by people several thousand miles from the holy city. The very fact that they were brought from Jerusalem will attach to them a degree of sanctity, and give them higher claims upon the attention of a multitude of Christians.

" I regret exceedingly that I could not obtain tracts in the Armenian and Russian languages.

" *April* 12.—Two English gentlemen arrived from Egypt to witness the ceremonies of the Passover.

" *April* 13.—Early this morning all the Greek pilgrims ascended the Mount of Olives, to perform a service in commemoration of the resurrection of Lazarus. During the service, two men (appointed for the purpose) passed through the assembly, soliciting charity for the church. As they passed, they solemn-

ly invoked the assistance of the saint, saying, 'Holy Lazarus, help us.'

"*April* 15.—Palm Sunday. The ceremonies at the church of the holy sepulchre were numerous and splendid. A large procession was formed, each individual bearing palm leaves and olive branches, in commemoration of the Saviour's entrance into Jerusalem, with shoutings of 'Hosannah to the Son of David.' That part of the gospel which relates to this subject was read in ancient Greek at the door of the holy sepulchre. If such occasions could be devoted to reading the Scriptures in a language which the pilgrims understood, they would become highly interesting, and communicate instruction to thousands of precious souls.

"*April* 16.—Accompanied the Russian consul and the English travellers to the monastery of the holy cross, a mile and a half west of Jerusalem. Here we were shown the hole in the earth, where grew, *it is said*, the tree from which was taken the cross. The earth has been carefully collected and carried off by pilgrims. Also, saw a large collection of manuscript Testaments, in Greek and Armenian characters, but none of them are offered for sale.

"Five miles further west, came to the Catholic monastery erected over the spot where John the Baptist was born. The convent is large, and in a good state of preservation. A little further west, we came to the house in which, tradition says, Mary, the mother of our Saviour, saluted Elizabeth. We saw, at a considerable distance to the north, the tomb of the prophet Samuel. To the west is the valley in which David slew Goliath.

"*April* 17.—Attended a Jewish funeral. After the body was laid upon the bier, a priest offered a short prayer, and the people responded 'Amen.' As they came near the gate which leads from the city, the priest offered another prayer, and then returned. After passing the gate, they commenced singing, and

continued this service till they arrived at the grave. It was on the east side of the Mount of Olives, where all the Jews consider it a privilege to be buried. It is a feast day with the Jews, and not lawful for them to bury the dead. A Turk was hired to do it. A hole was dug in the earth, about three feet in depth, and the body literally crowded into it without a coffin. A few stones were laid on the body, to prevent the dogs from devouring it. In all their ceremonies, there was nothing like solemnity or regularity.

"*April* 18.—Attended to the subject of establishing a school at Jerusalem. I proposed to Procopius that if he would obtain a suitable instructor, I would defray the expense of the school. He replied, 'There is now no person in Jerusalem qualified to instruct such a school as we need.' But he engaged to write to the patriarch, and afterwards give me more particular information on the subject.

"*April* 19.—At the usual service of the Greeks in the church of St. Constantine, the Russian consul, his dragoman, and his secretary, received the holy sacrament. After this was a service near the gate of the church of the holy sepulchre. The superior of the convent having laid aside his official robes, poured water into a basin, and began to wash the feet of twelve monks, who were selected and arranged before the door of the holy tomb. During this ceremony, they sang the following words, 'If I, then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye ought also to wash one another's feet.'

"At an early hour of the evening, the Catholics commenced a service in commemoration of our Saviour's sufferings in the garden. The music was so excessively mournful, that we could not but remember the words of our Saviour, 'O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, thy will be done.' The service concluded in a very abrupt manner, to denote the coming of Judas to apprehend his Lord. A little past midnight was another service by the Ca-

tholics, in commemoration of the scourging of Christ. Strangers were not admitted.

"*Friday, April* 20.—Early in the morning, the Catholics assembled on Mount Calvary. Those chapters relating to the sufferings of Christ were read in the following manner:—One took the part of our Saviour; another of Pilate; a third of the multitude; the fourth was the narrator, and read the words of the evangelist. When they came to the words, 'he bowed his head and gave up the ghost,' all the lamps were extinguished. The superior of the convent received the holy sacrament.

"At eight o'clock the gate was opened to admit the pilgrims. They passed, one by one, each being obliged (foreigners excepted) to pay twenty piastres. The dragoman of the Russian Consul stood at the door, to protect the Russian subjects. Thus passed the day.

"At sunset the Catholics came into the chapel of apparition, and ordered all the women to leave the room, saying, '*per le donne non c'e luogo.*' (For the women there is no room.) In a few moments the lights were extinguished, and a sermon commenced in Italian. The first sentence, which I distinctly understood, was this:

'*In questo luogo veramente, in questo giorno, anohe in questa ora giusto, il nostro Signore,*' &c. (In this very place, on this day, and even at this very hour, our Lord, &c.) The sermon continued about thirty minutes, when two priests, with two candles, and with a large cross, entered the chapel. A procession was then formed to visit the holy places. They came first to the apartment where the soldiers divided the garments of our Lord. Here we heard a second sermon in Italian. It was delivered with much less distinctness than the other. They proceeded to another small apartment, where a sermon was delivered in Spanish, relating to the crowning of our Saviour with thorns.

" The *fourth* sermon was delivered on Mount Calvary, on the spot where the Saviour was nailed to the cross; the *fifth*, on the spot where the cross was raised; both in Italian. After this, a cross was erected, having on it an image about three feet in length, exactly in the posture of a person crucified. Shortly after, two men designed to represent Nicodemus and Joseph, ascended the cross, drew out the nails, and carefully took down the body and laid it in a napkin.

" From Calvary, they proceeded to the stone of unction, where, after anointing the body, the superior of the convent delivered a sermon in Arabic. He began by clasping his hands, raising his eyes to heaven, as if he would say, ' all is lost.' Next proceeded to the holy sepulchre, where the body was deposited, and a *seventh* sermon delivered in Spanish. The services ended at half-past ten in the evening.

" The Copts and Syrians came next in order. They visited the same places as before mentioned; they carried paintings instead of images, and substituted singing for sermons.

" Twelve o'clock at night the Greeks formed a procession, and, besides visiting Calvary, passed around the tomb three times, as is their usual practice, in honour of the three persons in the trinity. The Greeks also carried paintings, but not images. There were no sermons during their services.

" *Saturday*, 21.—Nothing occurred in the morning of any importance. The afternoon was a memorable season. Every apartment of the church was crowded with Turks, Jews, Christians, and with people from every nation under heaven. These assembled to witness the supposed miraculous descent of the Holy Spirit, under the similitude of *fire*. It is estimated, that at least 5000 people were present. The governor of the city, and Turks of rank were there. A very convenient place was allotted me, to observe distinctly every ceremony. About twelve o'clock we

witnessed scenes of a very extraordinary nature, and highly derogatory to the Christian profession. A body of Arab Christians, natives of Palestine, were admitted to perform their part in the duties of the holy week. They began by running round the holy sepulchre, with all the frantic airs of madmen; clapping their hands,—throwing their caps into the air,—cuffing each other's ears,—leaping half naked upon the shoulders of their companions,—hallooing, or rather shrieking, to the utmost extent of their voices. This was the exhibition to five thousand people, who were in expectation of soon witnessing the descent of the holy fire.

"About one o'clock, the Turks entered the small apartment of the holy tomb, extinguished the lamps, closed the door, and set a watch. I was determined to enter myself the holy sepulchre, with the Russian consul, to see from what direction the fire proceeded. But they replied, 'The Turks will not give permission to strangers to enter.' Shortly after, the principal Greek priest entered the holy sepulchre, attended by the Armenian patriarch, and also by the Syrian patriarch. The Greek priest, however, entered the sacred apartment unattended. Every eye was fixed as the time approached. As we stood waiting, suddenly there darted from the sepulchre a flaming torch, which was carried almost instantaneously to a distant part of the assembly. I stood among the first to receive the fire, and to prove that, as to its power of burning, it contained no extraordinary qualities. The zeal of the pilgrims to get a part of the fire before the superior qualities departed, (as they say it burns like other fire in a few minutes,) endangered the lives of many. Several were well nigh crushed to death. Some lighted candles, others tow, with a view to preserve a part of its influence. Some held their faces in the blaze, saying, 'It does not burn.' Others said, 'Now, Lord, I believe, forgive my former unbelief.' After this, the pilgrims retir-

ed, abundantly satisfied with what they had seen and heard. I have thought it rather strange, that the Greeks, when urging upon me the evidence of the superiority of their religion, have never mentioned the miracle of the holy fire.

"*April* 22.—A little past midnight began the ceremonies of the resurrection. The church of the holy sepulchre was splendidly illuminated to represent the glory of that morning, when arose to live and reign the King of Glory. The Holy Scriptures were read in ancient Greek, Russian, Arabic, Turkish, Armenian, Latin, and in several other languages. The processions were splendid, and the ceremonies numerous.

"In the morning, all retired from the church to their respective habitations. Here end the services of the holy week.

"I was often led to hope, that the holy church will soon be consecrated entirely to the promotion of true piety among all classes of Christians. What an opportunity it will afford, to those who have the spirit which Peter possessed on the day of Pentecost; and who will boldly proceed to open and allege the Scriptures, and to lead thousands, by a blessing from above, to cry, 'Men and brethren, what shall we do?' If I am not greatly deceived, I behold, even now, the dawning of that glorious day. May all who love the gates of Zion hold not their peace, 'till the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth.'

"*April* 25.—The English gentlemen invited me to accompany them to the house of the governor. He received us with much politeness, and offered to furnish us with a guard from Jericho to the Dead Sea, and to give us all the assistance necessary.

"*April* 26.—At nine o'clock, left Jerusalem for the Jordan. The pilgrims were several hours in advance. The Governor of Jerusalem, attended by his guard, accompanied us. He requested the Eng-

lish gentlemen to ride immediately behind him. At twelve o'clock stopped at a fountain, where, *it is said*, our Saviour often refreshed himself on his way from Jericho to Jerusalem. A little further we passed Bahurim, where David was cursed and stoned by Shimei, and where, resigned to the will of his heavenly Father, he uttered these memorable words, 'Let him alone; let him curse; for the Lord hath bidden him.' At four o'clock, pitched our tent on the plains of Jericho. Went to view the present village of Jericho, consisting of a few mud huts, in the centre of an extended plain. Towards the east, beyond Jordan, we beheld the mount which Moses ascended, and whence he viewed the land of promise; to the west the wilderness in which our Saviour fasted forty days and forty nights, and was afterwards tempted by the Devil. We searched in vain for some remnants of the wall which God overthrew at the blowing of rams' horns. About three hundred Arabs inhabit this village.

"*April* 27.—After sleeping two hours on the ground, we were awakened at half-past two o'clock, and ordered to proceed to the Jordan. On our way, some remarks were made concerning the Scripture history of this river. The armies of Israel passed it on dry land 'right over against Jericho.' Elijah took his mantle and wrapped it together, and smote the waters, and they were divided hither and thither. Here also 'Elisha cried, *Where is the Lord God of Elijah?* and smote the waters, and they divided hither and thither.'

"Here, at the baptism of our Saviour, were the heavens opened, and 'Lo, a voice from heaven, saying, 'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.'

"At five o'clock, stood on the banks of Jordan. The current, in consequence of the great rains, was rapid and violent. The banks of the river were ten feet, at least, above the level of the water. The pil-

grims all rushed into the stream, and plunged themselves beneath the sacred waters. Among the spectators were the Governor and his guard.

" At six, left Jordan, and bent our course towards the Dead Sea. The Governor sent a guard with us. Arrived at half past seven o'clock. The way was through a desert of sand. The water of the Dead Sea is excessively bitter. We could see far towards the place where were engulfed the guilty cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, the inhabitants of which are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.

" Left the Dead Sea at eight o'clock, and arrived at our tent, on the plains of Jericho, at half-past nine. At two P. M., set out for Jerusalem, and arrived at eight in the evening. On our arrival, we learned that several Russian pilgrims had been wounded by the Arabs. The blame is charged upon the pilgrims.

" *April* 30.—Were informed this day by a letter from Rama, that the English gentlemen, on their return, were arrested, deprived of their arms, and insulted. What rendered the event more alarming was, that it was not done by a lawless banditti, but by orders from the Governor of Jaffa. Their arms were afterwards restored.

" *May* 2.—Sent several letters to Smyrna by an Armenian pilgrim.

" The number of pilgrims present at this Passover may thus be stated:—One thousand two hundred Greeks, one thousand four hundred Armenians, seventy Copts, twenty Syrians, fifteen Catholics, one Abyssinian: Total, two thousand seven hundred and six."

In Jerusalem are eleven mosques, five synagogues, and twenty monasteries belonging to the different denominations of Christians. Belonging to the Greek patriarchate of Jerusalem there are thir-

teen bishoprics—of Petrea, Nazareth, Lydda, Gaza, Philadelphia beyond Jordan, Cesarea, Bashan, Ptolemais, Bethlehem, Neapolis, Jaffa, Mount Tabor, and Mount Sinai. Five of these bishoprics are vacant. All the bishops live away from their diocesses. This information Mr. Parsons received from a respectable Greek priest.

"*May* 5.—Since my arrival in Jerusalem, I have sold Arabic psalters, ninety-nine copies; sold Greek Testaments, since leaving Smyrna, forty-one; Persian Testaments, (quarto) two; Armenian Testaments, seven; Italian Testament, one; gave away, where there was a prospect of usefulness, Greek, eleven; French, Italian, Persian, Armenian, nine.

"Repeated and earnest applications were made for Armenian Testaments, but it was not in my power to procure them. It will be remembered that, before my arrival, Bibles and Testaments were deposited in the respective monasteries by Procopius. How many have been sold I am not able to say; Procopius has not had time to prepare the account."

["Mr. Parsons here gives a particular account of the distribution of more than three thousand tracts after he left Smyrna. He gave them to many priests, bishops, schoolmasters, and inquisitive pilgrims. He sent them in every direction from Jerusalem. Some copies were in the hands of pilgrims, who live more than a thousand miles from that city. Should a missionary, residing there, be fully supplied with books in different languages, there is no calculating how much he might do in the great work of promoting genuine religion."]—*Ed. Miss. Her.*

"Before leaving the city, I must say that in many respects my time has passed pleasantly since my arrival at the holy city. My health, I think, was never better for three months in succession. If I had been better furnished with Bibles and tracts, I

might, by the Divine blessing, have greatly extended my usefulness. As it respects gaining and imparting information, this is indeed the centre of the world. The station must not be relinquished. The door is already open. Difficulties must be expected; but the good resulting from a mission established here will be an infinite reward.

"*May* 3.—Early this morning visited the bishops, and took my leave of them They said, 'We wish to see you again in this city.' Left the city at six o'clock by Jaffa gate. As I ascended the hill west of the city, I turned to take another view of the dearest spot on earth. The words of David were fresh in my mind, 'If I shall find favour in the eyes of the Lord, he will bring me again, and show me both it and his habitation.'

"At Jaffa gate I was stopped by two Turkish soldiers, in front of several cannon. One Turk stood at my right hand, and another at my left, with pistols and swords. After waiting for half an hour, orders came from the governor for permission to enter the city. The English consul received me into his family, and invited me to tarry a few weeks for more decisive information concerning the present disturbances. In the evening, visited the family of the Russian consul, and found it in a most distressing situation. A few hours previous to my arrival, the consul fled secretly from the city, and set sail for Constantinople. This he did, they informed me, to save himself from the bloody knife of the Turk.

"*May* 9.—I found a vessel bound to Scio. Agreed with the captain for a passage, at less than half the sum which I was obliged to give for a passage from Smyrna to Jaffa. At sunset, left Jaffa in company with the presiding priest of the church at Gethsemane, and a multitude of pilgrims. The report that the Russian consul at Acre had been beheaded, excited a general alarm, and the pilgrims were glad to escape from imminent danger.

"*May* 15.—Had some profitable conversation with the Greek priest who accompanied us. I requested him to prove from the Scriptures the articles of his creed; such as the duty of offering prayers to the Virgin Mary,—praying for the dead, &c He declined, and appealed to the fathers. He added, 'The Bible is not capable of affording instruction without the aid of the holy fathers.' But in what a deplorable situation, I replied, does this place the greater part of Christians! They must search a thousand folio volumes to learn their duty. Where is there one out of ten thousand that would not die in ignorance of the will of God?

"*May* 17.—With regard to confession, the Greek priest said, 'If a man commit a great offence, he must go to the bishop, tell his fault, and then supply the church with candles and oil, and give of his substance to feed the poor.' Not a word said about repentance towards God, and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

"*May* 20.—A memorable morning. Soon after sunrise, we observed a vessel before us, with a flag perfectly black, with the exception of a white cross in the middle, and a red crescent beneath it. We were soon hailed, and ordered to lower sails. The captain of the vessel, with a number of soldiers, visited us, ordered our flag to be taken down, and then, with the utmost contempt, trampled it under his feet, pronouncing a curse on him who should raise it. 'We do not take your vessel,' said they, 'nor do we wish to molest Greek pilgrims, but we seek the blood of Turks. They have executed our patriarch and our bishops, and we are determined to stand in defence of our lives and of our religion. All the Greeks in the Morea and on the islands are in arms. If you are arrested by a Turkish vessel, you must expect immediate execution.' It is impossible to describe the consternation which prevailed among the pilgrims. The women especially lifted up their

voices and wept. From our vessel they went in search of another vessel of pilgrims which accompanied us from Jaffa. There they found two Turks and about thirty Jews. They were all arrested and put in confinement. The Turks were to be beheaded immediately, but the Jews reserved for trial. The pilgrims stood on deck to see the dreadful scene, but we were soon at too great a distance to witness the execution. During the day we observed many other vessels with a similar flag.

"*June* 2.—A voyage to and from Jerusalem, in company with pilgrims, is attended with many things unpleasant; but without doubt affords the best advantage for giving instruction and for gaining an extensive influence. For more than two months, I have resided with pilgrims on their passage to and from Jerusalem. I have been with them, as one of their number, read to them the Holy Scriptures, conversed with them upon the nature and importance of renewing grace, and of constant preparation for the coming of Christ. Not in one instance have I been interrupted by improper conduct. During the whole passage, I perceived not a smile of contempt towards the word of God. Generally there was a pleasing attention. The effect of reading the Scriptures upon several of the pilgrims was very apparent, and very salutary. They understood what they read, and repeated to me the substance with great correctness. These impressions may soon be effaced, and they may, by the blessing of God, result in a saving conversion to the truth. Of this I am sure, that wherever they wander as pilgrims on earth they will be commended to God by many, who wait for the redemption of Israel.

"The reading of the Scriptures is perhaps the most effectual method of doing good at Jerusalem. In this respect, the time from Christmas to the Passover is invaluable. Multitudes, and among them men of influence and literature, from almost every part of the world, are literally assembled in one

place; and the information they receive will be communicated to thousands of souls. This station I view as one of the most important that can be selected, and one which cannot be relinquished, without great criminality on the part of the Christian community.

"*June* 16.—After dinner, my reflections upon the coming glory of Christ's kingdom were uncommonly refreshing. God has come out of his place in the fierceness of his wrath to punish the nations that have for ages forgotten him. The prospect is, that Turkey must be drenched in blood. How terrible is God in arms! But I feel a great desire to remain and see the end, if it be the will of our heavenly Father. To all who seek the prosperity of Zion, the present commotions will be viewed as the development of those eternal counsels which secure all kingdoms to Christ. Since the illustrious days of the Apostles, there have never been more evident displays of the determination of God to visit and redeem these sacred shores. Let us admire and tremble and adore. My prayer is for wisdom to conduct myself worthy of my calling, that whether in health or in sickness, in prison or in death, I may glory in nothing save in the cross of Christ, and by it be crucified to the world and to all its allurements."

In a letter to his oldest brother, Mr. Parsons mentions a distressing calamity which befell a number of pilgrims with whom he had associated. "The pilgrims left Jerusalem when I did. We sailed from Jaffa about the same time, in several vessels. One vessel stopped at Rhodes, without knowing of the war. The Turks came on board and beheaded sixty or seventy at one time. It affected me the more, as I had taken a very tender interest in their welfare. But they sleep in death, reserved to the final retribution, when both Turks and Greeks will render their account to the Judge of all the earth."

The following extract from a letter to his brother I. P., dated July 18, will only be adding one dark shade to that dismal picture which European Turkey has presented for the last three years.

"To give you some description of the state of the country, I will insert a few sentences from a letter which I received yesterday from the English consul at Smyrna. 'The poor Greeks are killed with as much cold blood as boys kill rats or spiders. Such is the horrid war which the Greeks have commenced. God only knows where it will end; I am of opinion, bad enough for the Greeks, however I may pity them, seeing them hunted down and shot before my flag. The bay (Smyrna gulf) is covered with tented boats full of Greeks, as the only refuge from the bloody knife or leaden bullet of the Turk.'

"The future is all dark to man, but noon-day to God. I find no reason for discouragement. For a short time we may be kept from Jerusalem; but it will not be long before we or other missionaries will enter that sacred city with shoutings of great joy. My brother, it is good to be here.—God is indeed giving the nations blood to drink, but the church is his peculiar care."

"*July* 18.—My birth day; twenty-nine years old. Thus rapidly I hasten to the close of my work. Yet a little, and years and days are past. This morning I desire to number my days, that I may apply my heart to wisdom. The past year has been a year of trials, and of peculiar mercies. I have not to accuse myself of idleness so much as of the misapplication of exertions. It is not enough to be busy—for many are busy who bring nothing to pass—busy about nothing. Upon reviewing the past, I can see very many occasions in which by a different arrangement greater good would have been the probable result. I find it

one of the greatest difficulties attending my mission, to know how to improve opportunities—how to address strangers—how much to say—what it is prudent to say—when to be silent—when to assume the boldness of the lion, and when the gentleness of the lamb. I have been oppressed, and sometimes in an agony for fear of doing what should not be done, or of leaving undone what should be done. The only relief is to look to him who giveth liberally and upbraideth not. The probability of being kept from Jerusalem a long time is my greatest trial. My heart is there. I never was sensible of greater attachment to any place. I am tried with impatience. Lord, enable me to say 'Thy will be done.'"

While on the Island of Syra, Mr. Parsons laboured diligently and faithfully as a missionary, so far as his health and retired circumstances permitted. In addition to the instruction of a few pupils, he read the Scriptures daily to "precious immortals." On the 27th of August, his health was good; but immediately after he was seized with a distressing malady, which was of long continuance. His first letter after he began to amend was written to his mother, from which I make several extracts.

"*Syra, October* 11, 1821.

"My dear Mother,—There is another subject which has been much on my mind,—that of the employment of angels, and probably of saints, in conveying souls to heaven. How this is done is not important. But how honourable and pleasing the employment! Who would not convey a prisoner, long confined in a dungeon, to his weeping, yet joyful friends? Who would not assist in conveying Lazarus to Abraham's bosom? Who would not aid St. Paul in his heavenly course to him whom, though unseen, he loved? I was long prying into this sub-

ject, when these words were impressed on my mind, 'Stand back—stand back, it is too deep for thee.'

"I think that Job says, 'When I lie down thou scarest me with dreams.' I believe that most sick people say that terrific dreams are a great affliction. In my sickness the Lord mercifully saved me from this pain. It has been a great consolation to me. I was sometimes in America, building meeting-houses, theological seminaries, teaching children. I believe if my dreams were true, I have done as much in America for the past month as any one minister. But I was often in Jerusalem preaching with great success, and once I reasoned before the Governor of Smyrna, as Paul did before Felix. You see I am a child; true I am very weak. Now, my mother, the Lord bless you in the family, in retirement, in your visits, in your attempts to do good; the Lord bless you in all things."

This was the last letter which Mr. Parsons wrote separately to his mother. At a later period he directed to her some devotional exercises of an early date. The manuscript containing them has the following preface or dedication:—"To my dear mother I leave the following reflections. Imperfect as they are, it may afford some consolation to know how the Lord hath led her absent son through this vale of sin and sorrow. I have reviewed these pages with pain, to find so much said of living to God, and yet so little progress in a divine life. But to enjoy one hour of communion with heaven outweighs in value the splendour and glory of the world. To have a single ray of light to guide the wandering feet through this dreary wilderness is a favour never to be forgotten. I bless God, and I call upon my friends to bless him for even a glimmering hope of attaining unto the resurrection of the just. May my dear mother walk evermore in the light of God's countenance, and find

a safe and triumphant passage to the shores of eternal peace."

It now becomes my melancholy duty to inform the reader, that Mrs. Parsons, the honoured mother of such a son, is no longer a dweller in this vale of tears. Having completed sixty-four years, on the 30th of January, 1824, she feel asleep, after a short but very distressing illness; nor have her Christian friends any doubt but that she found "a safe and triumphant passage to the shores of eternal peace."

A letter to his Father.

"*Syra, October* 15, 1821.

"The doctor says I may write a little, but must not read; so why may I not converse a while with my ever dear father?

"During my sickness I have had occasion often to bless my parents for teaching me the Scriptures. When a very little child, my parents required me to learn the twelfth chapter of Ecclesiastes, twelfth chapter of Romans, and twelfth chapter of Hebrews. Almost every verse of these chapters has ever since remained in my mind; and twenty-five years after, when on a sick, and in the opinion of all around, a dying bed, some of these passages gave me the greatest consolation.

"No person in this world will fully value the instruction of very little children. Impressions then made are remembered, and beyond a doubt, lead many to repentance, twenty, thirty, or fifty years after. Your exertions, my father, for Sabbath schools give me great pleasure. How many children will bless you, years hence, when departing from the world to their final Judge.

"I wish you, my father, to remember me to all Sabbath school teachers you may see in your missions. Greatly encourage them in their work. Their reward will be more precious than gold. The thanks

of one dying pupil will be a compensation of more value than the world.

"Satan well knows that this system is taking deep hold of his kingdom, and for this reason he will discourage teachers; tell them that children are not better, but rather worse. He will tell children that it is not honourable, it is a shame to be seen studying the Bible. This is very natural. For Satan knows that he cannot erase impressions made in childhood. He knows the Divine power of the word of God. He knows his weakness when a passage of Scripture takes hold of the mind.

"O my father, I am quite sure that this system, conducted with piety, is to be one grand instrument of converting the world. It is silent; nearly connected with revivals. Men of the world do not see its tendency. God only knows the extent of its influence. The more silence in these schools, perhaps the better. The less said, the more done. The less noise, the deeper the impression. One passage fixed in the heart is better than more in the head. I have thought that if the instructor would often repeat the passage after the child, without any observation, the effect would be salutary; as when the child says, 'God is angry with the wicked every day,' the instructor may say slowly, 'God is angry with the wicked every day.'

"Parade about religion is full of mischief. The adversary can thus undo in one day the labour of months. God Almighty destroy his cruel kingdom!

"I have said much. I must close. I gain strength every day. Once or twice I have walked abroad. The doctor says to-morrow I must ride. This is a great privilege. I know that my father will pray that this sickness may make me a better missionary.

"In all your missions, visits, and plans of usefulness, the Lord grant his peculiar blessing."

It is worthy of remark that while Mr. Parsons, at

the distance of more than five thousand miles, felt unusual solicitude, and had uncommon freedom in prayer for the church and people in Shoreham, they were blessed with a season of refreshing from the presence of the Lord.

Notwithstanding his sickness, and that bloody war prevailing in Turkey, which greatly embarrassed the operations of Christian benevolence, Mr. Parsons enjoyed a sacred calm within. He says in a letter, "The summer past has been a season of great affliction, yet I am enabled to say with new strength, 'none of these things move me.' My sick bed has not been without perpetual blessings." So far were his trials from producing a desire to return to the bosom of his friends in his native land, that they seem to have strengthened his attachment to the field of his labours. In a letter to his brother, Mr. L. P., he observes, "You know not how contented I am in Asia. Every thing looks natural, every thing pleasant. I once thought it impossible to gain so ardent an attachment to a foreign land. But where my work is, there are my affections."

Journal—"*Sabbath, Nov.* 18.—Great spiritual afflictions. Am cast out from the presence of God. My sins appear without a covering. I cry in the bitterness of my soul. It is difficult to leave myself at the Divine disposal, and to say, life or death as thou pleasest. I do desire life with a great and constant desire; not to return to America; not to see my friends, but to see Palestine,—to see our mission established,—to preach the gospel to the heathen. But God hides his face. I am in trouble. I would, and yet I do not. I perceive no advancement in grace,—no increase of strength against temptation. My hope is feeble, trembling. Found a little rest while reading the third chapter of Lamentations. God does not afflict willingly. Why should a living man complain?

"*November* 22.—Off Tino—wind in our favour—several vessels in sight. In the morning, supplied the officers of the vessel with religious tracts in the French language. They read them attentively, and the clerk of the ship was much interested with the tract called 'Short method with Deists.' He is a Catholic, but he remarked, 'Christians of all denominations must approve of this. It is well calculated to do good in this country.' He accepted of a copy which I had with me, for the purpose of perusing it frequently. At evening were prayers on deck. The sailors were all arranged in order, and with much solemnity repeated the Lord's prayer, the ten commandments, and offered prayers to the Virgin Mary. But the same officers who led the prayers of the evening, with the utmost external sanctity, during the day repeatedly denounced the most dreadful curses on the sailors. Surely this people draweth near to God with the mouth, while the heart is far from him.

"*December* 3.—At six set sail for the port (of Smyrna,) and at one o'clock brother Fisk arrived on board the ship. In view of the afflictions of the past year, our meeting was rendered deeply affecting to us both. May it tend to quicken us in our work, and prepare us for more vigorous exertions in the cause of Christ. Passed the night with brother Fisk at the house of Messrs. Vanlennep, and united together in observance of the monthly concert.

"*December* 4.—This afternoon took the room in the house of Mr. Werry, the English consul, which was occupied by the late British chaplain. On the 14th of December, 1820, I left the same room for a voyage to Jerusalem. On the 4th of December, 1821, I took up my residence in the same apartment. The year is past, and my first mission to the holy city is sealed up to the final judgment.

"*December* 16.—A precious Sabbath morning. We mingled our prayers and our tears for direction in duty. We found our desires one; our joys increased.

These seasons tend to diminish my attachment to the earth. I cannot be too grateful that we have a little time to set our house in order, and wait whether life or death is the appointment of our heavenly Father. We talk of plans for the future, and yet we would always be ready to leave them to be finished by others."

Extracts from a letter to myself.

"*Smyrna, December* 28, 1821.

"Dear Brother Morton,—I arrived here December 3d, and have had a precious month with brother Fisk. We cannot be too thankful for the privilege of meeting again on missionary ground, after a year of separation. It has greatly increased our desire to be united for many years in our blessed work. We design, if the way is plain, to sail to Egypt soon, in hopes of reaching Jerusalem before the Passover.

"I remember your people with great affection, and they will not forget that the tabernacle of David has fallen.

"Let me assure you, my dearest brother and sister, that we never felt greater encouragement in our work, and never greater oneness of soul and of spirit. God seems to be with us of a truth in some of our seasons of devotion. We bless God for sending us to this field. Every day will we bless him for enabling us to instruct a few souls in the knowledge of the Holy Bible. I look forward to our final meeting with some hope that the Lord will enable us to bring with us a few precious immortals redeemed by the blood of Christ."

Journal—"*January* 1, 1822.—*New year's day.* Set it apart for prayer and confession, and for supplication in regard to the future year. Seldom has a year dawned upon us with more sweet and melting seasons

of devotion. Perhaps never have we enjoyed more nearness to God in social duty. My present very feeble health reminds me of the probability that the next new year's day sun will shine upon my grave. I wish to think that I stand near to that dreadful hour."

A letter to his eldest brother.

"*Smyrna, January* 1, 1822.

"My Dear Brother,—To my aged and dearly beloved parents, to my ever dear brothers, Ira and Luther, I send from a far country, the family salutation,—a happy new year. Happy be that precious dwelling! happy all my dear relatives in their employments, designs; yea, may they know the happiness of that man, whose God is the Lord.

"My health is very much reduced. It is the decided opinion of the doctor of Smyrna, of brother Fisk, and of my other friends, that I should sail immediately for Alexandria in Egypt. I yield to their opinion, hoping that the Divine blessing will attend this design. I wish to set sail in view of life or death, having my eye fixed on the invisible world. I trust that, in our dear dwelling, will be offered many prayers to God for me. My brother, may we not fail of an entrance into the kingdom of our Lord.

"Dear brother, I have not time or strength to write more for the present.

"I pray for you without ceasing; I hope to hear from you again; if not, the will of the Lord be done.

"*January* 7.—The captain says we must sail this evening or to-morrow. I look forward with some solicitude, as my health is very critical. I have, however, here the same kind heavenly Protector as in America. After God has saved me from death a thousand times, I *must* not, (by his grace,) I *will* not be afraid. Dear brother, I do not regret leaving my

father's house. I rejoice to live a missionary, to live among those who are crying for the bread of heaven. Never was my mind more tranquil on this subject. But in view of all the dangers and distresses of the present voyage,—in view of sickness or recovery,—in view of putting off this earthly tabernacle,—in view of an eternal separation from time, I cannot but cast a wishful thought on my father's family,—a wishful desire that all the members, whom I love as my own soul, may have a part in the *first* resurrection. O that, with our dear parents, with brother and sister Morton and children, with dear brother Luther, we may sit down together in the temple of our God, and go no more out forever. Farewell.

"*January* 8.—Our trunks are ordered on board; I must go; leave the event; look up to the Keeper of Israel; endure what my heavenly Father shall appoint for me. Farewell."

Extracts from a letter to myself and Mrs. M.

"*Smyrna*, *January* 1, 1822.

"With pleasure never known before, do I send to the beloved family of my dear brother Morton, the usual salutation—a happy new year. Again, brother and sister M., with little D. L. and E., a happy new year! Be ye happy together, apart, in health, in sickness, in prosperity, in adversity, and, if such be the will of God, (from such sorrow may you be preserved,) happy when you stand around the bed of death. Dear brother and sister, my present very feeble health reminds me that you will not receive from me another new year's salutation. I am daily taught to relinquish my hold on earth. This clay tabernacle, I am not without apprehension, will soon return to its native dust. I wish to set my house in order. The contemplated voyage to Alexandria may be instrumental of my recovery, by the blessing of God; and it may result, as (a similar course) did

with the dear Mr. Warren, in a speedy removal from earthly scenes. I mention this to excite your fervent prayers to God for me."

Extract from a letter to Wm. G. Hooker of Middlebury, Vermont, dated

"*Smyrna*, *January* 7, 1822.

"Very Dear Sir,—We take with us to Egypt Bibles and tracts in many different languages, with the hope of distributing them both in Egypt and Mount Lebanon, and at Jerusalem at the Passover. Will not Christians implore a blessing on this attempt to save souls? We have already supplied ten or twelve thousand people with portions of that truth which conducts to heaven. The eye of him who hath promised, that his word shall not return void will be constantly fixed on these Bibles and tracts; and, long after we rest from our labours, souls may come to glory through the reading of this truth as it is in Jesus. Dear sir, it is a privilege to go forth bearing precious seed, and to leave the result with the God of the harvest. The harvest will be glorious and universal. Let us rejoice in this assurance, and never be weary in well-doing."

Journal. "*January* 8.—In view of the voyage I have been reading Psalms 91st and 121st. Job says, 'When he hath tried me I shall come forth as gold.' Again, 'I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food.' David says, 'At what time I am afraid I will trust in thee.' Jeremiah says, 'God doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men.' St. Paul says, 'Through great tribulation we must enter the kingdom of heaven.' On my voyage I desire to be perfectly tranquil. So far as I can decide, the question of duty is made very plain, exceedingly plain. To hesitate, then, is to be afraid to follow where my Saviour leads; it is to

violate my sacred vows; it is to hold my life dearer than the command of Christ; it is to forget that I am not my own,—not in my own employment,—but in the service of the God of missions. A missionary, by his *solemn* and *public* vows, does give up his life unto death,—he does turn away from earth and lay hold on heaven.

"Dr. C. called and examined my feet, which are swollen. He said that it was a sign of extreme debility. Thus I am every hour led to exclaim, 'Lord, what a feeble piece.' This evening two passages gave me comfort: 'My soul waiteth for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning.' The other, 'He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.' I would wait on the Lord as my physician, comforter, and eternal refuge from every fear, and from every affliction."

A letter to his parents.

"*Alexandria*, (*Egypt*,) *January* 17.

"Dear Parents,—I arrived at Alexandria on Monday last, at two o'clock afternoon. We had a remarkably quick passage; only five days from Smyrna. The effect upon my health will be better known after a few days residence. I hope that it will be ultimately for my good, although I am now greatly exhausted; I desire to wait as a child to know the will of a kind and heavenly Father.

"We may be happy if we abide in Christ, whether life or death be before us. A few friends visit us, with some of whom we have had profitable conversation.

"How interesting, my parents, to call to mind the visit of Abraham and Jacob and of Joseph to *this* land. How many prayers of faith Moses and Aaron made, when on the great work of delivering Israel. Here God raised up Pharaoh to be a vessel of wrath. Here

he brought out his people with a high hand, and sank the troops of Pharaoh as lead in the Red Sea. Here the great Head of the Church triumphed over all the gods of the heathen. Here he showed his determination that the gates of hell shall never prevail against his chosen people. O yes, the same infant Jesus who resided in Egypt is yet to appear in this land with more glory and majesty than when he appeared in the bush of Horeb Soon that blessed day will come! So come quickly, Lord Jesus."

Journal—"*January* 21.—Find my strength greatly reduced. Desire to be in readiness to meet my summons from the world; have but little expectation of recovering strength before I go hence, to be here no more. My great desire is to honour God and religion, even to the moment of closing my eyes. As this earthly tabernacle is dissolving, I pray God to build me up into a new, vigorous, spiritual man; then can I sing, with a dying voice, 'O death, where is thy sting?' I *did* desire to slumber till the resurrection on the holy hill Bethlehem, the birth-place of our Saviour. But I rejoice that the Lord has brought me to Egypt. As to the future, may I say, 'The will of the Lord be done.'

"*January* 22.—In view of my great weakness, and in consideration that all the means which we could use have not had their desired effect, we thought it duty to set apart this day for prayer. We enjoyed a season for several prayers, and for much conversation concerning God, as Physician and Parent. We read Psalm 106, Isaiah 38, and Lamentation 3, and many precious hymns. We said, this day brings *heaven* near. May it quicken us towards our home.

"*January* 23.—Rain most of the day; cold very uncomfortable; subject to constant chills; keep my bed most of the day; find the nights refreshing, the days long. Brother Fisk reads to me much of the time. Our morning and evening devotions are ever

deeply affecting. Thus while I descend to the banks of Jordan, I can gather a flower; I can see a ray of light from beyond the swelling flood. My flesh is literally consumed like the smoke, but nothing is impossible with God. He can make these dry bones praise him in this world, or he can lay them aside to raise from them a spiritual and glorious tabernacle for his kingdom.

"*January* 25.—In the morning read the account of the character and doom of unfaithful ministers, (Ezekiel xxxiii. Afterwards we both endeavoured to confess our past unfaithfulness, and to supplicate with many cries to God for the entire class of the clergy of every denomination in Asia. To be ever alive to this subject, it is necessary to contemplate often the wretchedness of blind leaders of the blind, and of their deluded followers beyond the grave, in the fire that is never quenched.

"*January* 27.—Early in the morning read from the Epistle to the Hebrews, and prayed together for our American brother missionaries, and then for *all* faithful missionaries of every denomination, and for every station, beginning at China, including India, Cape of Good Hope, Sierra Leone, Malta, Astrachan, &c. &c.

"At ten brother Fisk went to the house of Mr. Lee, the English consul, to preach to a few Protestants, who seem to be grateful for his services. The distant prospect of the *entire* conversion of this city to God, is a rich compensation for many years of toil and suffering.

"*January* 28.—Weather a little more moderate. Rest well during the nights. The Sabbath past was highly interesting. No interruptions; a little emblem of heaven. We read Isaiah xxiii. and the chapters relating to the love, suffering, and death of Christ. Gained *new* encouragement to perseverance in our work. This morning read from Corinthians concerning the

superiority of *charity*, and our united prayers were for a great increase of charity in our *own* breasts, and throughout this world of sin!

"*January* 30.—Walked on the terrace of the house, and viewed the city. Brother Fisk took me in his arms, and with ease carried me up the stairs. So wasted is this dying body. I assured him that it was my opinion that he would take care of this dissolving body but a few days longer. Let me be waiting, and at last say, 'Come, Lord, come quickly.' I am often very weary and sorrowful, but tears are not in heaven. O may I find the rest which remaineth for the people of God.

"*February* 1.—Awoke with great faintness, which continued for an hour. I tried to cast my burdens on the Lord. After a few hours, he enabled me to do it. 'Come unto me, said the blessed Saviour, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.' God is very kind to me in my sickness; my appetite and sleep are usually excellent. My mind calm in view of death, although I see heavenly things as through a glass darkly. My hope is, that as my outward man decays, my inward man will be renewed day by day

"*February* 3.—Awoke with greater weakness than ever I was sensible of before. I fear that I shall complain as my body decays. How much Christians who are in health should pray for their brethren on a dying bed. I need many prayers to-day. I cry out in my distress. I do sink under the rod. Shall I ever see Jesus as he is? Will Jesus make my dying bed? Let me not doubt. I cry with every breath to him who is my only hope.

"Read, prayed, and conversed with Antonio. I told him that I expected to die, and my desire was to meet him in heaven. He promised to read the Bible, and to pray every day. How dreadfully solemn to remain fixed between two worlds,—between time

and eternity,—between a mortal and immortal tabernacle! How dreadful, how pleasing to rest with all the saints!

"*February* 4.—Monthly concert. Read in the morning Psalm lxxii. and 1 Chron. xxix. and conversed respecting the last devotional attainments of David, and made one request to God that we may attain to a measure of the same faith, before we pass to the clear light of eternal day. We remembered to pray for the three churches in Boston [which contribute for the support of this mission,] and for all our brother missionaries, and last evening we thought of our duty to all the colleges in America. On *this* evening we could only raise our cries to God for kings, princes, presidents, governors, all in civil, and all in ecclesiastical authority, that they may all praise our God. Let every thing praise God."

A letter to myself and Mrs. M.

"*Alexandria*, (*Egypt*,) *February* 4.

"Dear Brother and Sister,—Although my strength is much reduced since my departure from Smyrna, yet I enjoy a good appetite for food; usually sleep well; have no regular fever, and can read and walk a short time every day. The mornings and evenings we pass reading the Scriptures, and in other devotional exercises. We seem sometimes to know how precious it is to be alone with Christ. Especially this morning, (monthly concert,) we read Psalm lxxii. and 1 Chron. xxix. with feelings of sweet nearness to heaven. Far from your dwelling and people; far from those with whom we were accustomed to meet on this holy consecrated day, we thought ourselves for a moment surrounding the same altar, and pouring out our souls before the same throne of grace. In this way, we gather a flower in the desert; we catch a glimpse of light just before the dawn of the celestial, everlasting day. My dear

brother and sister, that blissful vision of the paradise of God will not long be concealed from our waiting eyes. Is not the thought of it amazing bliss! But no ruined sinner, like myself, can think of it but with the prayer, 'God be merciful to me a sinner.'

"With regard to *future* arrangements, there must be much uncertainty. A skilful physician visits me daily, and has given it as his opinion, that in this climate I can never enjoy good health, although I shall probably recover from my present weakness. He advises us, after four or five weeks, to sail for Mount Lebanon, as the most promising place in the East, (and perhaps in the world,) for the preservation of life. This arrangement will place us in the very field in which we wish to labour for the summer. If my health permit, it is highly probable that we shall be on Mount Lebanon in March or April.

"I must, my brother and sister, call upon you again to bless God that I have a dear Christian fellow-labourer with me to nurse, comfort, and direct me in my present sickness. I cannot speak of this privilege too often, nor with sufficient gratitude to God!

"One more request. If I am removed suddenly from the world, I earnestly pray you to assure my dear brother L. that my most bitter pangs, as I view eternity, arise from the thought of an *eternal* separation from *one* whom I have ever loved as my own soul. Farewell."

A letter to Mr. and Mrs. L. of Goshen, Massachusetts, dated

"*Alexandria, February* 6, 1822.

"Dear Uncle and Aunt Lyman,—My repeated afflictions make me think of the dealings of God toward you My trials, however, are short, light, and not worthy to be compared with yours. For thirty, forty, and perhaps fifty years, our Divine and very

tender Redeemer has kept you in a furnace seven times heated. And so he has disciplined the other members of his family, not by a *single* stroke, then giving them the recompence, but by making every *earthly* comfort, sorrow,—by making every sweet, bitter, and every day, dark and wearisome. So David says, 'While I suffer thy terrors I am distracted.' Jeremiah says, 'I have eaten bread like ashes.' Daniel was with lions. Paul was in chains. Peter was *crucified*. The primitive saints were tortured, not accepting deliverance. But let us hear these men relate their own story, and express their own feelings. David says, 'It is *good* for me that I have been afflicted.' Jeremiah says, 'God does not afflict *willingly*.' The three children walked in the *fiery* furnace, leaning on the everlasting arm of the Son of God. Paul sang *praises* in his prison. Peter desired to die with his head downward, because he had denied his Lord. Martyrs kissed the stake that lighted them to glory. O in heaven what a glorious company!

> 'From torturing racks to endless life,
> On fiery wheels they rode.'

"The final experience of the child of God is this, that it is far better for him to be afflicted than to be in continual prosperity. It is better to walk in great tribulation than in the glory of this passing world. The path of the Christian is a very *mysterious* one—in the darkest night he sees a light above the brightness of the sun—in the greatest danger he is under the protection of an Almighty Friend—in wasting sickness he has a physician for the body and soul—in temptation by Satan, one hastens to his aid, before whom devils tremble—in death, the last agonies are rendered supportable, and even joyful; when the mortal frame decays, the immortal one becomes vigorous and glorious—when the world with-

draws, heaven opens to his view. At last all is heaven. All is glory. God is all and in all.

"May we be counted worthy of that glory which is to be revealed to all who are redeemed by the blood of Christ."

Extracts from Mr. Fisk's Journal.

"*Febauary* 9.—This evening I sat down by brother Parsons' bed, and he requested me to repeat the hymn 'There is a land of pure delight.' I added one or two concerning death, and some concerning heaven. He then said, I wish you would add one more, 'Show pity, Lord, O Lord forgive.' In the course of our conversation he said, 'If I were to live my missionary life over again, it seems to me I should wish to devote much more of it to reading the simple Word of God, and if any thing else, Scott's Notes. I regret very much that I have not spent more time in reading the Word of God, and especially the history of Christ.'

"While I am writing, my brother is asleep. When sick he often talks in his sleep, and has now been saying, 'The goodness of God,—growth in grace,—fulfilment of the promises,—and so God is all in heaven, and all on earth.'

"*February* 10.—Now that God, in his righteous Providence has seen fit to take my dearest friend and brother from me, I recollect, with melancholy satisfaction, the many conversations I have had with him. In our intercourse last evening, he said, 'I hope God will spare your life to labour in this mission till your head blossoms for the grave, twenty, thirty, or forty years hence.' Previous to this, however, he asked me whether I thought Scripture afforded reason to believe that departed saints are employed in carrying on the work of God on earth as angels are. This led me to speak to him of the angels as ministering spirits, as having carried Lazarus to

heaven, and appeared to Christ strengthening him; and of departed saints as engaged with angels in praising God, as rejoicing in the conversion of sinners, and probably, therefore, ministering spirits to their brethren who still remain on earth, as angels are. I added, 'Perhaps God will see best to remove you, that you may, when free from all sin and imperfection, and all the clogs of mortality, comfort, guide, and assist me in my mission, more than you could in the flesh.' We then conversed of being conducted to glory by Abraham or Moses, by Brainerd or Martyn, or by our lamented brethren Perry and Day. 'But,' said he, 'be all this as it may, if Christ receives us to himself, that will be sufficient.' When I spoke to him last, I expressed a wish that God might place underneath him the arms of everlasting mercy. He replied, 'The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him.' These were the last words I heard him utter."

A letter from Rev. P. Fisk to myself and Mrs. M.

"*Alexandria, February* 10, 1822.

"Dear Brother and Sister Morton,—If a letter which our dear brother Parsons wrote you six or eight days ago, reaches you before you receive this, you will probably be in some measure prepared to hear of a further decline of his health. Indeed, I trust Divine grace enables you to be in some measure prepared habitually for whatever tidings it may at any time please God to send. The experience of to-day, however, has taught me that it is not so easy a thing to be always ready to meet the will of God as we sometimes think it is. After brother Parsons wrote to you, his symptoms continued favourable, and our hopes of his recovery rather increased than otherwise until the day before yesterday morning. The diarrhœa, the disorder which reduced him so low in Syra, and which kept him lingering so long,

returned. It was not, however, violent, and the doctor gave some new medicine, which he seemed sure would immediately counteract it. Yesterday, however, it became more violent, and he grew weaker. This led me to entertain more serious apprehensions than ever before as to the final result of his disorder. Yesterday the doctor visited him twice. Neither himself, however, or any other person, entertained the least apprehension that he was to leave the world soon. Last evening, by his own direction, I prepared clean linen, flannel, and stockings for him to put on this morning. We spent the evening as we have usually spent Saturday evening, in religious conversation, reading the Scriptures, and prayer. We read John xiv. and conversed sometime about verse 27, 'Peace I leave with you.' I can truly say that I have seldom or never enjoyed so heavenly a season. His disorder seemed a little abated, and at eleven o'clock he insisted on my lying down to sleep. He had never had watchers, though I was always near him, and Antonio, his servant, always spread his bed on the floor, near that of Mr. Parsons, to be ready if he wanted any thing during the night. Twice while I was asleep he awoke and told Antonio that he had slept quietly, and felt easy and well. At half-past three, Antonio heard him speak or groan, arose, saw something was the matter, and called me. I was by the bed-side in a moment. But alas! what a heart-rending moment was that! It was too late even to receive a farewell for myself or for you. He breathed till a quarter-past four, when his earthly existence terminated. During this time I stood by him, used some means to try to revive, and sent for others to assist me, but all was in vain. The appointed time had arrived. I endeavoured to commend his departing soul to that Redeemer on whom he had believed. I pressed his hand, and kissed his quivering lips, but he took no notice of me, or of any thing around him.

" I have just returned from committing to the grave all that was mortal of our dear brother, and must give you some account of the solemn transaction. The heat and state of the air here render it necessary to bury sooner than is usual in America. I was desirous that the corpse should remain uninterred till to-morrow, but it was not thought prudent, and I saw no reason to insist upon it. The funeral was, therefore, appointed at four o'clock this afternoon. We have occupied some retired chambers in a public boarding house kept by a Maltese, who has a great number of boarders, principally merchants from Malta, resident in this place. There are six or seven English gentlemen here, and several English vessels in the harbour The English gentlemen, the captains of the ships, a great number of the Maltese, and some merchants from other ports of Europe, attended the funeral. The Maltese understand Italian and not English. I embraced the opportunity, therefore, to repeat to several of them, who called in the course of the day, some texts in Italian, particularly, ' Blessed are the dead,' &c. and ' Be ye also ready.' To eight or ten of them who came in a little before the time appointed for the funeral, I read in Italian 1 Cor. xv. We then moved in procession to the grave, which is about a mile from the house. The English consul, Mr. Lee, walked with me next to the corpse, and the others, to the number I believe of sixty or seventy, followed us. The corpse was carried and buried in a coffin, as is the custom in America. It was buried in the church-yard at the Greek convent, where the English of this place usually bury their dead. When arrived at the tomb, I read some parts of Job xiv. Psalm xxxix. 1 Cor. xv. and Rev. xxi. xxii. then made a short address to the company, offered a prayer, and then the dust was consigned to its kindred dust, there to await the sound of the archangel's trumpet.

" I have now given you the history of this eventful day. The perusal of it I know will cause your

hearts to bleed. But I know also that God can support and comfort you. In the latter part of his life, brother Levi prayed much for his relatives. It would be utterly impossible for me to tell you how devotional he has been for two months past. Though he did not expect to die so soon, yet he has often remarked, when conversing on the subject, 'Perhaps I may fall away suddenly;' I believe there is something of the kind in the last letter he wrote you. Such you see has been the fact. He was I think in a peculiar manner prepared to die. He conversed about it daily. His heart was in heaven. Earth and all its affairs seemed at an immeasurable distance below his feet. His God was preparing him for his sudden departure, though I did not know it. O that we may all have grace to live as he lived, and to die as he died."

Extracts from Mr. Fisk's letter to the parents of the deceased, written on the day of his death, before his interment. After mentioning that a few days previous to his death, his symptoms were not thought immediately alarming, he says,—

"One circumstance, however, gave me strong fears that he would before long be taken from us: His whole soul, all his thoughts and desires seemed to be continually in heaven. He seemed to have forgotten the earth and all it contained, except that now and then his mind seemed occupied with what concerns the kingdom of Christ. His communion and intercourse seemed to be rather with angels and glorified spirits and his Redeemer, than with the inhabitants of earth. Yes, my dear friends, his Redeemer was preparing him more rapidly than either he or I was aware, to put off his clay tabernacle and enter the new Jerusalem. Shall we weep or shall we rejoice? For myself I seem ready to sink under my loss, and yet I would, with a full heart, and with all my soul,

bless God for the grace bestowed on my dearly beloved brother.

"For several weeks it has been our custom, morning and evening, to pray successively. Brother Parsons usually offered a short prayer last. In this he almost uniformly prayed for a Divine blessing on our surviving parents, brothers, and sisters, and their partners and children. Let us endeavour to be grateful that he prayed for us so often, so long, and with such strong faith."

Thus lived and died this devoted and successful missionary. The death of such a man at any time would have been greatly lamented; but his departure before he had completed his thirtieth year, at a time, when in consequence of voyages, journeys, and acquaintance with oriental languages, his prospect of usefulness was greater than ever before, was an uncommon loss. It is an event of Providence which calls upon us, in submissive silence, and reverential awe, to adore that God whose dispensations are often shrouded with "clouds and darkness." His "way is in the sea, his path in the great waters, and his footsteps are not known."

Never in America has the death of a missionary occasioned more unfeigned and lively sorrow. I dare not affirm that the whole tide of sympathy was merely the result of attachment to him. Hundreds, probably thousands who had never seen him, felt very deeply. With the name of Parsons was associated Bethlehem and Zion, Gethsemane and Calvary, the sacred sepulchre and the Mount of Olives, places, when all superstitious veneration is laid aside, most dear to Christians. They mourned not merely the removal of a distinguished missionary, but the loss of Jerusalem, of Western Asia, of the American church. Their feelings were widely different from those which predominate when a valuable minister, or veteran missionary, having worn out a long life in the service

of Christ, descends to his grave. Mr. Parsons was but a youth when he died. Though his constitution was slender, and his health frequently infirm, yet many cherished the fond expectation, that he might perhaps with increasing health live many years, and impart to perishing multitudes the bread of life. Possibly too much was expected. Be this as it may, God in the plenitude of his wisdom and goodness has called him hence, and taught us that, with a kind of Divine munificence, he can lay aside those who appear most necessary for the advancement of his kingdom on earth, and still carry forward to a glorious consummation his great purposes of benevolence.

One of Mr. Parsons' correspondents,* speaking of a letter written at Jerusalem, but not received till more than a year after the writer's death, and then read to his congregation, says, "I may safely say I never witnessed among them such a general burst of feeling. In an instant, the heart of every individual, old and young, seemed to be dissolved, and a flood of grief burst forth from every eye." The muses were not silent upon the mournful occasion. Several well written pieces of poetry have appeared. The Faculty of Middlebury College, that hitherto favoured institution, which has had the honour to train to usefulness a Warren, an Andrus, a Larned, and others whom delicacy forbids to name, appointed a member of the senior class to deliver at the annual commencement in August 1822, a poem on the death of Mr. Parsons.†

It is, however, a source of consolation that he did not expire among infidels and strangers. Though far removed from kindred and his native land, he was attended during his last three months by the com-

* Rev. Nathaniel S. Prime, pastor of the Presbyterian church in Cambridge, New York.

† The poem will be found at the end of the general remarks.

panion of his college walks and theological studies, his companion in labour and tribulation. Mr. Fisk was permitted to comfort his feeble brother while descending into the vale of death. Had Mr. Parsons found a watery grave, his dust would have been safe amidst the pearls and coral of the ocean. But we cannot forget to be thankful that he was honoured with a Christian burial, and that his mortal part sleeps with the dust of ancient martyrs. Very seldom has a death been attended with such precious consolations.

Mr. Parsons' mind was most happily balanced. His reason, judgment, imagination, memory, and taste, all acted in delightful concert, all kept their proper place. His talents were highly respectable, and of the most useful kind. They did not dazzle like the meteor for a moment, and then sink in perpetual darkness. There was a gradual improvement of his mental powers, a steady rising from the first dawn of reason to the day of his death. But so far as human effort is concerned, his eminence was greatly owing to unwearied diligence. Remnants of time, which often pass unimproved and unnoticed, were seized by him for retired communion with his heart and his Saviour, for epistolary correspondence, or for some other valuable purpose. One of his maxims was, "It is wicked, it is cruel to waste a moment, when so many nations are waiting to receive the Gospel;" another, "An hour lost may indirectly ruin a soul." How excellent soever his opportunities were for obtaining a classical and theological education, it was principally owing to persevering application that his mind was so richly furnished with valuable learning.

To an uncommon zeal for the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom, he united great prudence and "the meekness of wisdom." Without great maturity of mind, and exemplary discretion, there is no probability that he would have obtained for benevolent

purposes nine thousand dollars in about nine months; nor have gained so many respectable friends in his own country and abroad.

He was also equally remarkable for the orderly employment of his time, and for a regular arrangement of his studies and labours. He had acquired habits of order and accuracy in all that he did. And this was one reason why he was enabled to accomplish so much in so short a time.

But the loveliness of his dispositson formed probably the most distinguishing trait in his character. Very seldom have such a symmetry of graces and so much loveliness combined in an individual. His amiableness was accompanied with dignity of deportment, pleasantness of manners, refined sensibility, decision of character, and unfainting perseverance in duty and usefulness. From the "Christian Spectator," a periodical work justly held in high estimation, I quote the following paragraph, which glances at several traits of character, and gives a very just description of the subject of this memoir. "Mr. Parsons was greatly beloved, and is greatly lamented. He was a very devoted Christian, of highly respectable talents and various learning. He was accomplished as a man; in disposition, manners and address, fitted to find welcome access to, and to adorn, the most intelligent and refined society. He was eminently characterized by a graceful and dignified mildness of demeanour, a readiness of utterance and action, and a happy adaptation of himself to surrounding scenes and circumstances. He was indeed among modern missionaries what Melancthon was among the reformers."

The piety of Mr. Parsons was by far his brightest ornament. It was this especially that rendered him so lovely and beloved; and without doubt eminently fitted him for the society of angels and glorified spirits. After what has been recorded from his own pen, little need be said, and little of consequence could be

added, respecting his piety. But there were seasons in which a sacred sweetness and serenity of temper, and a heavenly elevation of thought and feeling, seemed to pervade his whole soul. And never was this more apparent than during a few of his last months. The Sabbath, though often a day of humiliation, was generally a day of gladness and rejoicing. Though far removed from austerity and affected devotion, few if any observe the day more devoutly. When worshipping with the assemblies of the saints, and when far removed from such privileges, he often found himself surrounded with the secret presence of the Most High, and held delightful communion with a better world. On the whole, he was a very happy man. To use his own words, "Short, but pleasant is our residence below." Relieved from pecuniary embarrassment in acquiring an education, blessed with relatives and friends who greatly loved him, and were beloved by him, and favoured with frequent and delightful communion with God, there was nothing till he entered on public life, except the plague of his own heart, and common afflictions, to interrupt his enjoyment. Although after this, his cares and trials were greatly increased, yet his joys were evidently greater than before. Very few in so short a life have enjoyed so much real happiness, such heavenly consolations. Frequently he experienced "joy unspeakable and full of glory."

In the subject of this memoir, we see the genuine tendency of evangelical or orthodox sentiments. Conscious of the vileness of his heart, and of the imperfections of his life, he found in himself unanswerable proofs of the entire moral depravity of man. And feeling the necessity of constant Divine influence to purify his heart, to elevate his affections, and to invigorate his graces, he did not doubt the necessity of regeneration and sanctification by the all-powerful agency of the Holy Spirit. The doctrine of the Trinity, however obnoxious in some cases to the pride of human

reason, was considered by him the foundation of all true piety, and was incorporated into his most delightful views of God. The Saviour he embraced by faith as his teacher, high priest, and judge; as his Lord and his God. His view of the forlorn and remediless condition of the wicked in the future state, led him to feel intensely, and to labour abundantly for the salvation of souls. He believed the moral law to be the standard of duty for all rational creatures, and every deviation from perfect obedience he acknowledged to be sin; hence he was led to examine the motives of his conduct, the secret springs of action, and he deeply lamented any discoverable departure, even in thought, from this heavenly rule. The grace of Christ, displayed by the cross, and revealed in the gospel, appeared truly infinite; and hence his gratitude and joy in view of this finished redemption. Realizing that he was not his own, but bought with a price, he felt himself sacredly bound to glorify God, and to devote his all to the service of Him who had loved him and died for him. His conceptions of the infinitely glorious God, and of himself, produced deep humility, and unfeigned repentance. His faith generally strong, and frequently triumphant, led to a persevering course of self-denial and vigorous effort for the salvation of men; and his confidence in the goodness, power, and promises of Jehovah, induced him to persevere and abound in prayer. His religious sentiments were interwoven with all his sorrows and all his joys, and were evidently the foundation of all that was lovely and useful in his Christian character. And they were so far from terminating in the narrowness of bigotry, or even exclusive attachment to a particular denomination, that they produced the most enlarged charity, the most expansive benevolence. He regarded all his brethren who appear to love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, whatever were their forms of worship, and to whatever communion they belonged. In a word, the Holy Spirit, by enlightening his under-

standing, and purifying his heart, impressed deeply on his mind the great truths of Christianity, and enabled him to bring forth fruit in an eminently holy and useful life.

It is probably more difficult to speak with confidence respecting his usefulness while in Asia, than during any preceding period. The effect of his communications on Christians in this country cannot be told; nor can we know in time the effect of Divine truth imparted to more than ten thousand people. His journal, written at Jerusalem, kindled in many hearts a flame which has not ceased to burn. His labours as a foreign missionary may eventually be found to have had more influence upon the kingdom of Christ than the whole of his preceding services. He was the first Protestant missionary that ever visited the holy city with the intention of establishing a permanent mission there. He went "to prepare the way of the Lord" for future missionaries; as a pioneer to a host of worthies who, at no very distant day, shall "rear up the tabernacle of David that is fallen down," and cry on the heights of Zion, and on the mountains of Israel,—"Hosanna! blessed is he who cometh in the name of the Lord." Mr. Parsons' visit to Jerusalem was hailed by Christians on both sides of the Atlantic, as the dawn of a brighter day to the mingled people of the eastern world.

As a preacher, Mr. Parsons was interesting and popular. His person and manner were prepossessing, while his clearness of thought, and fervour of piety, were calculated to make a very salutary impression. Few if any young preachers are heard with more pleasure and profit. He was alike interesting to a refined congregation, and to the rustic inhabitants of the mountain cottage. Many of his sermons made a very powerful impression; but so far as they were instrumental in promoting a reformation in sinners, or of comforting the saints, we would ascribe the

glory, not to the preacher, but to God, whose servant he was.

Aside from missionary journals, and some letters, none of Mr. Parsons' writings were published during his life, except a tract on the Divinity of Christ, and his farewell sermon. The tract was designed for a particular section of the country where he laboured as a domestic missionary, and was undoubtedly useful. The sermon has been well received, and is worthy of its author.

Who that knew Mr. Parsons, who that reads these pages, can fail to see a strong recommendation of early piety? It was this that rendered his career so brilliant, so useful, and so happy. When very young, he was seriously inclined, and much attached to his Bible. Of his own accord, when a little child, he wrote two catalogues, one of the good, the other of the bad kings that reigned in Judah and Israel. What youth, after becoming acquainted with his history, will not feel a deepened conviction, that "wisdom's ways are pleasantness, and all her paths peace?" And upon the survey of such a character, what friend of the Redeemer will not feel deeply humbled in view of his own deficiencies, and find kindling within more ardent desires to devote his talents and his all to God?

Mr. Parsons has set an illustrious example, and by it, "being dead, he yet speaketh." "He was a burning and shining light." "Few men," say the American Board of Commissoners for Foreign Missions,* "in any employment, even among those who have been distinguished for piety, leave so spotless a name as was left by Mr. Parsons. His natural temper was uncommonly amiable, his manners were pleasing and calculated to inspire confidence—his piety child-like, ardent, equal; and consecration to his Divine Master entire and universal. Such a man the American

* See the 13th Annual Report for the year 1822, p. 73.

churches sent forth as their first messenger of peace to inhabitants of the Holy Land; as a pledge that they are bound to fulfil obligations long deferred;—as an offering of first fruits to the ancient seat of sacred learning, and Divine manifestations; an offering, as we have abundant reason to believe, 'well pleasing, acceptable to God.' Far, very far, from our hearts be all murmuring or repining, on account of his early removal. Let us rather rejoice when we behold so bright a display of Christian virtue." Deeply as the early exit of Mr. Parsons is lamented, let us rejoice that his warfare is ended so honourably, that his character is forever established, and his memory blessed. Let us rejoice, too, that the Palestine Mission still lives, that its trials have endeared it to the Christian community; and that men of kindred spirit, and of firmer constitution, still continue those labours of love which were commenced by their excellent predecessor. May the American church, which has had the honour of sending to the holy city one of her brightest ornaments, abundantly increase her efforts to carry back the blessings of the gospel to the land once wet with the Saviour's blood, to the countries once travelled by the first messengers of grace. And may Christians in the old world and in the new, with apostolic zeal, persevere in their benevolent exertions till the whole family of man shall be brought to the obedience of faith;—when, glorious era in the history of this ruined world,—

> "One song employs all nations; and all cry
> Worthy the Lamb, for he was slain for us.
> The dwellers in the vales and on the rocks
> Shout to each other, and the mountain tops
> From distant mountains catch the flying joy:
> Till nation after nation, taught the strain,
> Earth rolls the rapturous hosanna round!"

MONODY

ON

REV. LEVI PARSONS.

A voice is heard in Jerusalem;
'Tis the voice of Pilgrims met for prayer;
A tear is shed in Jerusalem;
'Tis the tear of votaries weeping there.
The lamps still gleam in the holy tomb,
To chase away the midnight gloom;
And still is seen on Calvary,
The place where once the Saviour hung,—
And olives deck Gethsemane,
Where erst his hallow'd frame was wrung;
The harvest waves on Sion's mount,
The water plays in Siloah's fount.*
There was an ear which heard the sound
Of weeping Pilgrim's solemn prayer?—
There was an eye which gazed around
Upon the hallow'd objects there;—
There was a heart that long'd to see
The captive Jew from slavery free;—
There was a spirit here below
With sorrow pierc'd for others' woe!
That ear can hear no more the solemn sound,—
That eye is clos'd in death's oblivious sleep,—
That heart has lost its quick elastic bound,
That spirit lingers not on earth to weep!
Where Nilus' fabled waters roll along,
Where Alexander's ancient turrets rise,—
Thy spirit, Parsons, lur'd by seraph's song,
Spreads its untiring wing and upward flies.
There was thy dying couch at evening spread,
And thy frail form was there in peace repos'd.

* See Mr. Parsons' description of Jerusalem.

Gently the slumbers play'd around thy head,
Till sleep's all-conquering hand thy eyelids clos'd.
Peaceful and pleasant was thy balmy rest,
Angels seem'd hovering o'er thy calm abode,
To bear thee to the mansions of the blest,—
The presence of thy Saviour and thy God.
And they did bear thee !—Up the azure skies,
Swiftly they sped on light ethereal wing,
To that bright place where endless pleasures rise,
And Eden blooms in everlasting spring.
No father near watch'd his expiring child,—
No anxious mother stood his eyes to close,—
No sister mourn'd with frenzied sorrow wild,
As from its clay thy sainted spirit rose.
What though no dirge is chanted o'er thy tomb,—
What though no sculptur'd marble near it rise,
Thy name to rescue from oblivion's gloom,
And say, " 'Tis here departed goodness lies !"
Angels shall hover o'er on airy wing—
The passing traveller drop the pitying tear—
The mournful dirge the moaning breezes sing,
Of one to virtue's friends so dear.
Who now like him shall toil for Judah's race ?
And who like him destroy Mohammed's sway ?
Parsons and Martyn, lock'd in death's embrace,
Have spread the soul's glad wing and soar'd away.
'Tis God who guides the planets as they roll,
'Tis God who bids the comets far to roam,
'Twas He who summon'd Parsons' holy soul
From foreign lands to its eternal home.
He will remember Israel's fallen race,
He will restore them to their fathers' land !
Rich are the plenteous treasures of his grace,
And sure the wondrous workings of his hand.
Why weep ye then, O Zion's faithful friends ?
Why mourn ye thus, who Parsons' memory love ?
Our God, who here below her cause defends,
Has call'd him hence to purer joys above.

A SERMON

IN DEFENCE OF REVIVALS IN RELIGION,

BY THE REV. LEVI PARSONS,

WRITTEN IN PALESTINE. NOW FIRST PUBLISHED.

Acts ii. 41.

"*And the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.*"

This is a part of the account given us of the memorable operations of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. Our blessed Saviour, a short time previous to his sufferings, spake distinctly of the coming and work of the Divine Comforter, and commanded his disciples not to depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father. Accordingly, the disciples assembled in an upper room, "And continued, with one accord, in prayer and supplication."—"And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a mighty rushing wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues as of fire, and sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and spake with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance."

This extraordinary event occasioned no small inquiry in the city. The multitude came together, and were confounded because that every man heard them speak in his own language. A wise Providence ordered that these things should not be done in a corner. The witnesses were numerous—not *ignorant* men who might be easily deceived, but *devout* men—not people of *one* nation, who might be under the influence of national prejudice or superstition; but "devout men out of *every* nation under heaven, *i. e.* from Media, Mesopotamia, Judea, Cappadocia, Asia, Phrygia, Pamphylia, Rome, Crete, and Arabia." Not simply the *friends* of the risen Redeemer, but those very individuals who had taken an active part in the dreadful tragedy of the crucifixion. These were the men, who at the preaching of Peter, "were pricked in their heart," and said, "men and brethren, what shall we do?" These were the men who "gladly received the word," and were the same day baptized, and united to the spiritual church of Christ.

This, in short, is the Scriptural account of the operations of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. An account full of instruction to all the children of God, and one which will be read, with the liveliest interest, to the latest period of the world. In view of this subject, two inquiries present themselves for our examination.

I. Are we to expect similar seasons of refreshing from on high in every age of the Church?

II. What means are to be employed for the promotion of a work of the Holy Spirit?

I. Are we to expect similar seasons of refreshing from on high in every age of the Church?

The ministry of the Apostles was blessed with numerous seasons of the operations of the Holy Spirit,

perhaps not less remarkable and salutary. After the persecution which arose from the healing of the impotent man, the disciples were assembled together and prayed, and the place was shaken where they were assembled, and they *were all filled with the Holy Ghost*, and they spake the word of God with boldness.

There was another similar season in Cesarea. While Peter was speaking to Cornelius, the Holy Ghost *fell on them who heard the word*, and on the Gentiles was poured out the gift of the Holy Spirit. The Apostles relating this event to the Jewish Christians observed, the "Holy Ghost fell on *them* as on us at the beginning."

We read of another special work of grace in Samaria. "The people with one accord gave heed to those things which Philip spake, and when they believed they were baptized, both men and women. The Apostles laid their hands upon them, and they received the Holy Ghost."

But it is not the will of God that this work should be limited to the ministry of the Apostles. Saith our Saviour, "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you FOREVER."—"The promise," saith St. Peter, "is to you, and to your children, and to all who are afar off, even to as many as the Lord our God shall call." This, too, he said on the day of Pentecost, as an explanation to the multitude of that which they saw and heard. This which ye now see and hear is but a partial fulfilment of the Saviour's promise to send the Comforter. The promise is exceedingly broad; extending to *you* and to your children, and to all who are afar off, even till the whole work of redemption is completed.

It would not be difficult to prove that in every age of the Church it has been the usual method of Divine Providence to bring sinners to repentance by very similar operations. But the testimony of Scripture

is distinct and decisive. The work of the Holy Spirit, which was very strikingly manifested on the day of Pentecost, will continue and increase; will be carried on in this city, and in that city,—in this nation, and that nation, until all the Redeemed are collected into one family; until the spiritual temple of Christ is completed, and the top-stone laid with shoutings of grace, grace unto it.

II. What means are to be employed for the promotion of the work of the Holy Spirit?

Here, again, we may look to the day of Pentecost. The means then employed are the means which God usually blesses when sinners are brought to repentance. They may be included in three particulars—private self-examination and prayer—union in heart and design—and faithfulness to sinners.

1. Private self-examination and prayer.

After the ascension of our blessed Lord, the disciples retired to an upper room for prayer; to an *upper* room, that they might be secure from the noise and rage of the world, and enjoy a tranquil season of religious devotion. Thus they continued in prayer and supplication until the day of Pentecost was fully come. And how often, at the present day, is the remark made, that revivals of religion begin in the closet. And how distinctly have many of the most extensive religious excitements been traced back to secret supplication, fasting, and prayer! Perhaps a private member of the church enters into his secret chamber, with a heavy heart and mourning countenance. He finds no access to God. He goes backward and forward, but cannot find Him whom his soul loveth. He reviews his past life and weeps over it,—he calls to mind the sacred vows which are upon him, and renews them,—brings forward every

beloved idol, and slays it, and commends his whole body and soul to the mercy of God. The darkness is dispelled—his soul is at liberty—light shines into his heart—hope beams in his countenance—and the unction of the Holy One creates joy unspeakable and full of glory. Here observe the *beginning* of a work of grace. The Spirit diffuses from one breast to another, until the whole house is filled with the sacred wind from heaven.

How much time may elapse from the first special operations of the Holy Spirit till the church is generally refreshed, can by no means be determined. Instances may be mentioned in which *years* have elapsed between the beginning of a revival of religion in *secret*, and its beginning in *public*. A few individuals have received a foretaste of the blessings which are to follow, and they cease not, day nor night, to make their supplications to the God of Heaven. The darkness may be thick around them, yet by faith they see the light dawning. Zion may be mourning, yet they expect to see the Lord appear in his glory, and build up her walls.

Neither can it be known how *extensive* the work will be. Sometimes it pleases God to produce long struggles,—months and years of weeping for the conversion of *one* sinner. The blessing is ever in view, but is continually receding. In this manner, the child of God is taught his own weakness, and learns to wait at the footstool of mercy. At other times, the active Christian is not permitted to see with *mortal* eyes the desired blessing. He prays, waits, and weeps, and still the heavens over his head are brass, and the earth powder and dust. Like the faithful servants of God of old, he dies in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off. How many faithful *ministers* and faithful *parents* have desired to see a day of refreshing, and have not seen it! But when their work, and toils had closed, when their spirits had fled to a

brighter world, then their people and their children were gathered unto the fold of Christ.

In the distribution of his favours God is a Sovereign, and most cheerfully will every saint reply, "Even so Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." But while God reserves to himself the right of conferring blessings as he pleases, yet the encouragement which he gives to his children is abundant. Usually the shower of grace soon succeeds the first gatherings of the clouds. Prayer is mighty to prevail with heaven. The Lord seems to be waiting to hear the groaning of the prisoner that he may open his prison door, and set him at liberty. He seems to be listening to hear the sighing of fervent prayer that he may bestow the consolations of his Spirit. How often has the blessed Spirit descended like a mighty rushing wind. How vast the change often produced within the short period of a month, or of a week! How many times have we been obliged to *stand still* and see the salvation of God!

But while stupidity prevails, all expectations of a work of grace are vain. When no closet becomes the chamber of fervent supplication, the Holy Spirit takes his flight to a more friendly abode. The church is left to be a prey to the destroyer. The Christian wanders farther and farther from duty and from happiness; the sinner fills up the measure of his days in wickedness, until the light which once shone most clearly is almost extinguished. In this manner many once flourishing churches have gradually declined till their names were blotted out from under heaven. "O how unsearchable are thy judgments Lord God Almighty!"

2. There must be union in the church.

It is more than once stated respecting the day of Pentecost, that the disciples were of "one accord." "They continued with *one accord* in prayer and sup-

plication." Of the three thousand who believed, it is said, "They continued with *one accord* in the temple." Our blessed Saviour inculcates the importance of this union: "If two of you shall *agree* on earth, as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them."

The Apostles were blessed with astonishing success, for they were of one accord. Their object was one—their desires centred in the same point—their employments and rewards were the same, and the Lord went every where with them by the influences of his Spirit.

The age of Martyrs was an age of special revivals of pure religion. Then surely Christians, while afflicted, persecuted, and tormented, were of one *heart* and of one *soul*. Every private interest was relinquished; every earthly prospect abandoned, and every desire centred in God. They gloried in nothing save in the cross of Christ. The great object of all their labours and sufferings was the salvation of the souls of men from the wrath which is to come. But the union which precedes a revival of religion is something more than a suspension of hostilities—a state of spiritual inactivity, denominated in Scripture "Lukewarm, neither cold nor hot." So far from this, spiritual union unites one Christian with another—checks the rage of discord and contention—removes stumblingblocks from the weak and wandering—cuts off a right hand and plucks out a right eye rather than occasion offence—concentrates the entire energies of the church—it goes out to seek those who are lost—rouses to action those who are slumbering—and yearns over the returning prodigal. It is this which arrays the church with her beautiful garments, and makes her terrible as an army with banners. As in an army every eye is fixed upon the same object, every private interest is lost in the good of the whole; so with Zion. She awakes from her criminal slumbers—arises from the dust—puts

on the whole armour of God--stands faithfully to the post of duty till the Lord appears in his glory for their deliverance.

In the recent revivals of religion are not all these remarks strikingly exemplified? Injuries are forgiven--breaches repaired—confessions sincere and penitent—enemies become friends--the wandering are reclaimed—the vicious reformed—the slothful become active and faithful--and the whole church appears comely as Jerusalem, and terrible as an army with banners. And what is this but the work of the Holy Spirit--the operations of Divine grace! Cast your eyes upon those churches where stupidity, discord, or evil speaking prevail, and can you find any thing resembling the day of Pentecost? Surely not. All holy beings seem to have forsaken them. The Holy Spirit, "Like a peaceful dove, flies from the abodes of noise and strife." O how many churches do actually compel the Holy Spirit to depart! How many professed Christians, with their own hands, shut the door of mercy, and while they are fanning the flame of discord, Zion gradually decays, the enemy comes in like a flood, and scatters the beloved flock of Christ. O what occasion for weeping and lamentation, when we see God thus dishonoured, and souls sent down, in unbroken ranks, to the world of despair.

3. Faithfulness to sinners.

As soon as the disciples were filled with the Holy Ghost, we find them *publishing* the wonderful works of God. Peter standing up, with the eleven, charged home upon his hearers the crime of murdering the Son of God. "This same Jesus whom ye have crucified, God hath made both Lord and Christ." It was this charge, clearly supported, which checked their rage of opposition, and brought them prostrate at the feet of the Apostles as supplicants for mercy.

What a blessed example is this to all who wait for the influences of the Spirit! They need not hesitate. The Apostle has furnished them with a *message*, and with the method of inculcating it. The path is plain; let no one begin to make excuse. Reflect a moment upon this memorable discourse. The Apostle was *bold*. He knew well that he was addressing an assembly of persecutors, and that he was delivering a message which had a tendency to increase their rage, and to lead them to acts of violence; yet he feared not them who kill the body. His object was to declare the *truth*, without regard to the feelings of sinners. How full of instruction is this to those who let sinners *perish* rather than offend them! St. Peter likewise declared the *whole* truth He did not hesitate to call his hearers *murderers*—murderers of the *Son of God*. He treated them as *rebels*, and exhorted them to immediate repentance. Here is the duty of those who labour for a revival. They must show the sinner that he is *guilty* and ruined. The fountain of iniquity in his heart must be unveiled. The criminality of rejecting an offered Saviour, of living without prayer, must be seriously enforced upon the conscience. This work must not be done in *part;* but every *whit* must be told as in view of the day of judgment. All his refuges of lies must be exposed and destroyed, and every weapon wrested from his hands. Unfaithfulness here is sure to ruin the soul. O the condemnation of that *minister*, or of that *Christian*, who lets the sinner go with ignorance of his own guilt—who declares a part but not the *whole* of the counsel of the Lord.

As Christians must be bold in this duty, so must they *persevere*. No matter if their motives are vilified, their characters defamed,—no opportunity must be lost,—no means spared to bring the impenitent to the knowledge of the truth. The *intemperate* man must be admonished of the guilt of impoverishing

his family, and of prostituting his talents; and more, he must be reminded of a judgment to come. The *profane* must be made to feel that God will not hold him guiltless who taketh his name in vain. The *young* and *thoughtless* must be told that for all these things "God will bring them to judgment." The wicked must not be left after one admonition, but must be followed, day after day, with many prayers and entreaties. Their everlasting peace is at stake; the torments of hell are ready for them. Let Christians cry, "Lord spare them." Let them weep in secret places for their pride; let them pray without ceasing; let them give the Lord no rest till he come and build up Zion.

With such a spirit prevailing in the church, a blessing might reasonably be expected. Sinners would fear and tremble—the house of prayer be crowded with serious worshippers—converts multiplied. The stately steppings of Jehovah would be seen; Zion would enlarge her borders and strengthen her stakes; those who went forth weeping, bearing precious seed, would return with rejoicing, bringing their sheaves with them.

A FEW REFLECTIONS.

I. The conversion of many sinners, in a short period of time, is consistent with the Divine purposes.

It may seem incredible that three thousand souls should be convicted, converted, and added to the church within the short period of a few hours. But is any thing too hard for the Almighty? He who by a *word* created the world, can breathe upon the valley of dry bones, and cause them to stand up an exceeding great army. Is any length of time necessary with Him who hath the hearts of all men in his hand? May not one discourse *now* be blessed to the

conversion of thousands as well as in ages past. Well may those who withhold their aid upon this principle take heed lest they be found fighting against God.

II. It is no argument against a revival of religion that some apostatize.

Among those who were examined by the Apostles were Ananias and Sapphira, and Simon Magus. Yet the apostacy of these was no argument against the sincerity of the others. And if at the present day some go back, and walk no more with Christ, it is no certain evidence that the work is not of God. It is a humiliating reflection, that so many who once bore the name of Christians draw back and walk to perdition. If we ever weep in secret for sinners, it should be for those who thus crucify afresh the Lord of glory, and put him to open shame. But still some seed remaineth and is precious. Some sinners are converted in heart, and endure unto the end. Some are raised from the gate of hell and made heirs of eternal life. The angels in heaven have rejoiced over the repentance of lost sinners, and given glory to God for the enlargement of his kingdom of grace. If then the result be so honourable to God, and so happy for man, every human being is bound to aid, by every possible effort, a revival of religion. O where is the man who will take deliberate measures to divert the minds of the serious, and to prevent a rational regard to a future state? Who can be more lost to all fear of God, and more cruel to the souls of men, than he who takes away the only hope of eternal life? Ye who engage in this work of cruelty and death, go to the dying bed of one whom you have induced to grieve the Holy Spirit. Listen to his dying groans! Hear him reproach you as the cruel murderers of his soul! "You led me away from all serious reflections of death. You taught me to profane the name of God—

to neglect the Holy Bible—to walk in the ways of sin. Now I must die. I have no hope.* I have no God. The day of grace is past. I am lost forever. I sink to hell." If you cannot receive such a message, desist, I beseech you, from your guilty work of opposing the Spirit of God.

What security can you give against the terrors of exchanging worlds? Do you give any compensation for this amazing loss? No; God is witness that you leave the poor sinner when he most needs your assistance! You cannot stand by his dying bed and support his departing soul! Far from this. You teach him to forget the dying hour, and then leave him when he cries for your assistance! O that I could proclaim the guilt and danger of such a man!

* The above remarks recalled to my recollection the following anecdote which appeared in an English publication some time time ago. It furnishes us with a most affecting illustration of the dreadful effects, not indeed of a direct attempt to pervert the mind, but of that want of fidelity, in order to avoid giving offence, with which those who assume the character of Ministers of the Gospel are too often chargeable.

Some years ago there was a Nobleman, who, though a frequent attendant at church, and very kind to the Clergyman of the parish, lived in the open practice of many dreadful sins. When laid on his death-bed, he sent for the Clergyman, and addressing him by his name said, "Did you know I was living in the practice of such and sins?" naming them. "Yes, my Lord, I did!" "You did!" replied the Nobleman, "why then did you not warn me of the consequences?"—"I am sorry I did not," replied the Clergyman, "but I was afraid of offending your Lordship, knowing how kind you have always been to me, and having a large family chiefly dependent on your Lordship's favour,"—when he was suddenly stopped by the Nobleman, who exclaimed, "Wretched man, through your negligence I am damned!" and soon after expired.—W. I.

But I forbear. To God I commend these miserable beings. And while they remain prisoners of hope, my unceasing prayer shall be, "Lord forgive them, they know not what they do!"

III. We learn the danger of divisions in the church.

Divisions in a church prevent *secret* prayer,—interrupt *family* devotions,—disturb the peace and happiness of neighbourhoods—diminish the interest and fervour of religious conferences,—prevent seasons of commemorating the holy sacrament,—grieve the Spirit of God, and give occasion to the enemy to blaspheme. Brethren, I charge you, in the name of the Lord Jesus, that ye do those things which make for *peace*—that ye be of one mind, and of one soul. I charge you, as you value the souls of men, and the prosperity of Zion, that you let no root of bitterness spring up and trouble you. Look to some churches within the circle of your acquaintance, and by their afflictions and desolations, see how our blessed Saviour is wounded in the house of his friends, and put to open shame! Permit not the enemy to triumph over *this* church. But like the first Christians continue "with one accord in supplication and prayer," and the God of all love and peace will be with you, and bless you. Yes, the Lord, our Saviour, will take up his abode with you. He will be with you in affliction and in prosperity. He will defend you from every enemy, and suffer no weapon formed against you to prosper. In the solemn hour of death, his rod and his staff will comfort you till you pass through the gates to the New Jerusalem.

IV. What is the present state of this church?

Were the beloved Apostle who addressed the seven churches of Asia to address *this* church, would he condemn or approve? I will not censure you,

brethren, but this much I must say, that your efforts to preserve the Holy Spirit among you should be uninterrupted and unceasing. God will not bless a *slothful* church. He will not bless, usually speaking, a *divided* church. He will not bless a *prayerless* church. Have you been for a long time languishing? Perhaps you have not made ready for the coming of the Divine Comforter. There may be in the camp a golden wedge, the accursed thing. Make diligent search, brethren, for God is not slack concerning his promise "If thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever!"

A SERMON

IN DEFENCE OF MISSIONS,

BY THE REV. LEVI PARSONS,

WRITTEN IN PALESTINE. NOW FIRST PUBLISHED.

MARK xvi. 15.

"*Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature.*"

EVERY command of Christ is sacred. The reason of it may be concealed, and obedience attended with difficulties, yet to reject it is to renounce the Christian faith. It is not sufficient to observe one command at the neglect of another, for he who offends in one point is guilty of all. Indifference to the general system of our Saviour's injunctions proves a man to be an infidel.

Let us reflect for a few moments upon the command in our text.

I. It was not designed simply for the Apostles.

For proof of this, the testimony of the Apostles themselves is sufficient. When they were about to leave the world, why did they appoint *other* men to the sacred office of the ministry? Why did they ordain elders in every church, and charge them in

the name of the Divine Redeemer, to preach the Gospel? Would the Apostle, filled with the Holy Ghost, and instructed by our blessed Lord, presume upon such authority without a special commission?

We have, then, the opinion of the Apostles; and their testimony surely will not be controverted.

If further evidence be required, we might appeal to the promise connected with this command, "Lo I am with you always," saith our Saviour, "to the end of the world,"—a promise which extends to every devoted ambassador of Jesus till the final consummation of all things.

But I need not enlarge. Christians generally admit in full the force of this injunction. Indeed, it is so repeatedly enjoined, both by our Saviour and by the Apostles, that we cannot, without violence to the word of God, escape the conviction of duty.

II. It is plain.

The language is simple, accommodated to the understanding of a child. There is in it no mystery—no equivocal expression—no doubtful phraseology. It is plain to whom the commission was given, "go ye," my disciples, the ministers of salvation. The design of this commission is plainly stated, "preach the Gospel." The field for their operations is mention, "the whole world." It is plain to whom the Gospel is to be preached, "every creature." The consequences are very particularly mentioned, "He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned." The encouragement is expressed in simple language, "Lo I am with you always to the end of the world."

What is there in all this above the understanding of a child? It does not imply that the Gospel should be preached to a *few*, while *nations* are left to perish; or that it should be preached in *one* place until all are converted, or in those parts of the world where

it can be done without toil, suffering, and hazard. Neither is there any permission given for *delay*. The Apostles were commanded to go with all possible despatch; to part with comfort, friends, and country; to gird on the whole armour of God; to endure hardness as good soldiers for Jesus; to contend against principalities and against powers; and more, to give up their lives unto *death* for the Gospel of salvation. Why then this prevailing hesitation, this universal indifference? We may now form some excuse to calm the conscience, but what can be said in the judgment?

III. This command is important.

It was given under circumstances the best calculated to produce a deep and permanent impression. The Apostles had listened to the farewell address of their Lord; had seen him apprehended, scourged, and crucified. After his resurrection, the Lord appeared again to his disciples, forgave the sin of their shameful apostacy, led them out a little way from Jerusalem, and, stretching forth his hand, he blessed them, saying, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature;" and then he was received up to heaven.

In this command is included all that is valuable in the Gospel of salvation; all that comforts in life, supports in death, and gives blessedness in eternity. Here is the only balm for the healing of the nations, the only repose for a guilty conscience, the only bread and water which satisfy the soul, the only guide to a better world. What are the characters and comforts of those who know not the Gospel? What is the testimony of St. Paul? "When they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were they thankful, but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish hearts were darkened; being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication,

wickedness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit; without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful." Such was the moral state of the heathen in the days of the Apostle; and what is their present state? Let Missionaries, let Christian travellers testify. Think for a moment of the horrid and impure rites of Pagans—of the immolations of widows—of human sacrifices—tedious and cruel pilgrimages—of the destruction of children by the hand of their parents; and then say, are the heathen now better than they were in the days of the Apostles. Where the blessings of the Gospel have not been received, what is there but darkness, impurity and blood? Where is any rational comfort for the afflicted? any unfailing refuge from the terrors of a death-bed? any benevolent hand to guide the departing soul on its passage to the invisible world? Yes, Christian, you have in your hand a sovereign remedy for the miseries of the heathen. Give them your Bible and your religion, and you will diffuse light and happiness where is wretchedness and despair. Give them your religion, and you will demolish temples of idolatry, save a multitude from a watery grave, or from the funeral pile, and guide immortal souls to the rest which remaineth for the people of God.

The question, then, is not a trifling one. It is left instrumentally with Christians to say, whether the nations of the earth shall have the bread of life, or perish; whether they shall have the pleasing hope of salvation, or remain with nothing before them but fiery indignation. And while we hesitate, they are hastening forward to the grave, and to the judgment. While we hesitate, our mortal existence is terminating, and our feet will soon stumble upon the dark mountains of death.

It need not be said that the heathen are in the hands of God, and he will do all his pleasure. So are your children in the hands of God when languishing upon a bed of sickness; why then do you

seek the aid of a physician? Your own lives are in the hands of God, but will you on this account neglect food and raiment? Every time you seek the aid of a physician, every time you pray with your children, you proclaim your belief in a system of means, and you destroy your own excuse for neglecting the heathen. Every prayer to God for the success of his kingdom carries with it this sentiment, that success is connected with *means*. And if the suppliant presents the prayer of sincerity, he presents *himself* to his heavenly Father, and gives up every earthly interest for the advancement of the kingdom of grace. How affecting is this view of the subject? How many millions of the heathen are waiting to receive instruction from Christians! And until some benevolent missionary shall carry to them the bread of life, they will continue starving and perishing. Until means are employed in proportion to the greatness of the work, we look in vain for the conversion of the world to the kingdom of Christ.

IV. The command is practicable.

It will be readily admitted that the work of converting the world, according to human calculations, is attended with difficulties. The greatest proportion of the world is still in darkness. The multitudes of the heathen are still cherishing their fatal delusions, and strenuously attached to the idolatry of their fathers. Pagans, Mahomedans, Jews, and Infidels, compose a formidable host against the progress of truth. Every inch of ground will be disputed, even at the price of blood. Admit all this, and more. Reduce the number of the true children of God to a very little flock,—magnify the strength and violence of the enemy an hundred fold, and still why speak we of difficulties while the hearts of all

men are in the hands of God? Blot out the *promises* of the word of God, and then speak of difficulties! Withhold the omnipotent agency of the Holy Spirit, and then say the world cannot be converted!

Is it said that the heathen cannot be reformed? Has the experiment been faithfully made? There was indeed a promising commencement under the ministry of the Apostles, and the progress of truth was rapid and overwhelming. But their zeal and faithfulness were not imitated. The successors of the Apostles did not go on conquering and to conquer in the strength of the Lord. They returned from their work, permitted the enemy to triumph, to persecute, and scatter the beloved flock of Christ. And through a long succession of ages, few and feeble were the efforts of the church to carry into execution this last and important command of our ascended Redeemer. Zion hath long sat in sackcloth, and stretched out her hands in vain for friendly assistance.

Blessings, numerous and invaluable, have been conferred upon us. Revival has succeeded revival; churches have been established and enlarged, but till very recently not a finger was raised for the salvation of the heathen! And even now, our exertions are infinitely below our ability and our obligation. What are forty or fifty missionaries from a nation so highly favoured as ours? I say what are forty or fifty missionaries for 400 millions of the heathen? And where do we find churches united, bold, and persevering in this benevolent work, determined to yield only with their lives? Where do we find the zeal and fortitude among Christians which may be found among the men of the world. O Christian, must it be true that they will contend with more zeal for an *earthly* crown than we for an *heavenly*? Must there be more fortitude for perishable *dust* than for the redemption of souls? Our own negligence has put a

weapon into the hand of the enemy, which is employed with tremendous success against the beloved cause of Christ.

In proportion to the means employed, success has been highly encouraging. Look at a few facts.

A mission was established among our western Indians by the Mayhews, and within six years the number of Indians who gave evidence of a saving change of heart was 282, including 8 Indian priests. Brainerd, a solitary missionary, visited the Indians, and within five months after he preached his first sermon, he formed a church of 26 adult members. In 1815, a mission was established among the Cherokee Indians. A revival soon commenced. The natives were converted to the Lord. A church was soon formed consisting of 25 members. If such is the result of such feeble exertions, what might have been expected from the united efforts of all the churches? If, from the time in which the Mayhews first preached to the Indians, there had been a succession of holy missionaries stationed in every tribe, how few among the millions of the heathen in our own land would have remained unenlightened and unconverted?

Look at the mission in Africa! It is but a few years since the Gospel was first preached among the Hottentots. And now there is a church at Bethelday into which have been received 442 converts; another church at Guiquatown of 59 adult members; another at Bethesda of 60; at Claredon 70. In the year 1816 were admitted into one church 142 converts. In India, the number of converts within a few years is computed to exceed 20,000, besides the circulation of an immense number of Bibles and religious tracts, and the religious education of many thousand heathen children.

Look at the mission at Otaheite. It is true that for a number of years the prospect of success was very unpromising. The beloved missionaries were

obliged to hope against hope; to experience severe and repeated afflictions; but the night is passed, and a glorious morning opened upon them. The first convert to Christianity was in 1812; two years afterwards the number exceed 50; in three years 200. The present number of those who have renounced idolatry, and declared their belief in Christianity, on the Society Islands, is computed to be 4000!

The Christian religion is now the prevailing religion of eight different islands. Idolatry has given place to the mild and blessed precepts of the Gospel of peace. Many devoted Christians have longed to see this day and have not seen it. O brethren, let us stand up to our work! If we sleep now, we sleep the sleep of death! If we withhold our assistance, the wealth of others will roll in, in abundance, to the treasures of the Lord. The heathen will be given to Christ for an inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for a possession.

I repeat it, the command of Christ, "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature," is a practicable command. Let the zeal of the Apostles fire every Christian breast, and the Lord will not be slack concerning his promise. The kingdoms of this world will soon become the kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

I infer from this subject,

I. That the neglect of this command is a sin against knowledge.

With the Holy Scriptures in our hands, and with the most decisive evidence that God is fulfilling his promises, we cannot remain ignorant of duty. Christians do know, and acknowledge it too, that the heathen are perishing for the bread of life. They know that the Gospel is to be preached to them as the appointed instrument of their salvation. They know that the heathen are living in pollution, and

that to every good work they are reprobates. The light of eternity will show that in every respect we are without excuse. The Apostles themselves might have neglected the heathen with as much propriety as we can. Under these circumstances, our indolence is a sin of no common aggravation, and merits no common condemnation.

II. Negligence of the command is a sin against Divine mercy.

It is mercy, infinite grace, which hath made us to differ from the heathen. We have been selected as a nation highly favoured of the Lord. To us have been committed the oracles of God, the invaluable treasures of his grace. Upon us hath arisen the Sun of Righteousness with healing in his beams. We have an Almighty Redeemer; we have a hope full of immortality. We have the joyful expectation of obtaining an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, which fadeth not away. Go, Christian, to your closet, commune with your heavenly Father, contemplate the riches of grace which have been manifested to your souls, look to heaven as your eternal rest from sin and sorrow, and then say, in view of all this blessedness, is it not *ingratitude* to forget those who need the consolations of the Gospel as well as we? Yes, every moment of delay is a plain declaration that we lightly esteem the blessings of the Gospel. It is confirming the heathen in the belief, that our religion is no better than theirs; and must I not say, that it is crucifying the Lord afresh, and putting him to open shame.

III. Negligence is a sin against the promises.

Will the man who has an unwavering conviction in his own breast, that the Gospel is the only remedy for the heathen,—the only effectual security from

everlasting burnings,—be sparing in his charity, or reluctant in duty? Can any Christian, who believes that this life is the only state of probation,—that the heathen once lost are lost forever,—cease to labour and pray for their conversion? Who that contemplates, with the lively exercise of faith, the tremendous events of the judgment day,—that considers the glory which will redound to God, and the joy which will be diffused among the redeemed by the conversion of one heathen, can be weary in well doing? What is the import of these excuses, hesitations, delays, and objections among the professed people of God? What do sinners think of them? What shall we think of them when summoned to the judgment? These things must not be. Christ is dishonoured, and souls are ruined by our distrust of the promises of God. Every thing urges us forward to duty. The welfare of Zion, the beloved church of God, should excite us to duty. Our privileges, our hopes of heaven, should stimulate us to faithfulness; the danger and misery of the heathen should excite us, and the prospect of the speedy removal to the grave and the judgment should excite us to give all diligence to have our work done, and well done. Withhold not your assistance and your prayers; give to the heathen the bread of life; count all things as loss and as dross for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ. Let it be the language of every Christian, here am I, Lord, and here is that which thou hast given me, dispose of all according to thy glory. Here am I, send me far hence to the gentiles. Send me to prison and to death if it be for thy honour, and for the salvation of sinners. Amen.

EXTRACTS

FROM

REV. LEVI PARSONS'

FAREWELL ADDRESS

TO THE SOCIETY OF INQUIRY UPON THE SUBJECT OF MISSIONS,

IN THE

THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY AT ANDOVER.

DELIVERED SEPTEMBER 23, 1817.

Is this the deplorable state of our world? This the mournful condition of the church? Eighteen hundred years have elapsed since our Saviour sent his disciples to preach the Gospel to *every* creature, and yet a *world* lying in wickedness! Shall we sit down discouraged and despair of success? It is the bold decision of the infidel, it is rebellion against heaven—the practical denial of the government of God. Let us then give up our Bibles, our privileges, and our hopes of glory, and take refuge in the insensibility and hardness of the Atheist! The world will be reformed, or our Bible is a *fable*, and our hope a

delusion. Convince me that the heathen will not be converted, and I will be an *atheist.* But we are not left in such a dilemma. We may look to heaven with the full assurance of faith, and hear our heavenly Father say, "Fear not little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." Were there but one pious family in the world, it would be madness to despond. After all God has done, is doing, and has promised to do,—after all that martyrs have suffered at the stake,—after all the prayers which have been offered up,—shall we retire from the field and leave the enemy to triumph? Even with a fair prospect of the promised land, shall we retire into the wilderness and perish? No, brethren, our duty is plain; we have every encouragement for perseverance. God is on our side, we need not fear. Every Christian must come forward with the inquiry, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"

In an examination of the question relative to personal duty, it is indispensable that we be *entirely devoted to God.*

True religion implies a disposition to forsake father and mother, friends and country, for Christ. Every truly devoted Christian will inquire, not where he can enjoy the most ease, escape the most trouble, obtain the most wealth or honour, but where he can most successfully *labour* in the cause of *Christ*, and promote the *salvation* of men. He lifts his eyes to heaven and says, "Lord send me; send me to the ends of the earth; send me far from parents, friends, country; to the wilderness, to prison, or to death, if it be for thy glory, and for the promotion of thy kingdom. If *duty* bid me suffer at the stake, I will go there without a trembling emotion; if I am to be separated from every earthly enjoyment, I will *rejoice* that I am counted worthy to *suffer* for Christ." Such, in an eminent degree must be our feelings, brethren, in this inquiry. With the *world* under our *feet*, and with our eyes fixed on the *cross*, we must determine

to count *all* things as loss and dross for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ.

But *all* make these assertions; none are willing to say that they have not given all to Christ; and yet many are unwilling to be *entirely devoted* to his service. But let us bring these confessions to the test. Are they accompanied with an ardent attachment to the souls of the heathen, with fervent prayer to be directed in duty. If not they are unmeaning words.

A decision must be obtained in view of the *whole* work. Were the United States the only field to be occupied, my duty and my decision in regard to it might differ essentially from my *present duty* and *decision*. Blot out from our account, Mahomedans, Jews, Pagans, and my duty *then* might not be my duty *now*. While I examine the waste places of Zion in our *own land*, my inquiries are to extend to the *heathen*. I am to inquire with respect to the *number* of the heathen, the *prospects* of success, the effect which a mission to them would produce upon our own churches, and the good which would result to the cause of Christ 50 years hence, and then decide as to the field for personal exertion; and a decision obtained after this examination will be *safe*, and produce a tranquil conviction of duty.

A decision once obtained must not be relinquished. There is a suitable time for *deliberation*, and a suitable time for *action*. The period of the former must usually be short, and the result decisive, and then the latter will be persevering and probably successful. If we enter the field with a firm conviction of duty obtained after a devout examination, our *work* and our *trials* will be pleasant. And if we in our spiritual moments obtain evidence of duty, are we to question this evidence in seasons of despondency? If we examine a mathematical proposition, and pronounce it correct, are we, when the proof has escaped us, to question this decision? If after an examination of the moral state of the world, we think it duty to be

missionaries, shall we give up this object when our minds are less exercised upon the subject of the Redeemer's kingdom? Then let us give up the *expectation* of obtaining a *decision*, and depend upon momentary impulses of the mind. The state of the heathen may be *very different next year* from the *present* state. Are we then to *change* with every *change* in the world, to vibrate between opposite opinions till the period of usefulness is past. I hesitate not to say, that a decision to be a missionary, obtained in the manner prescribed, cannot be relinquished, except when there are special interpositions of Providence, without infinite hazard both to usefulness and happiness.

I cannot speak upon this subject with indifference. And as I value the happiness and usefulness of my brethren, I would hope that no one will leave this seminary without a firm and tranquil conviction of duty. Will any one excuse himself from this examination upon the supposition that he is not qualified for a missionary? Admit that some are not qualified for a missionary life, would a particular knowledge of the condition of the heathen be useless? So far from this, it inspires the soul with courage, gives energy to every exertion, and is the most probable way to usefulness and peace.

But who has assured us we are not qualified for missionaries? Are we qualified for ministers? Then we are in some sense qualified for missionaries. Are we willing to suffer for Christ in *America?* We should be willing to suffer for him in *India.* If we love souls in our *own land*, and are disposed to forsake *all* for them, we would cheerfully make the same sacrifice in any *other* land. The qualifications for a missionary are, *love for souls*, *devotedness to God*, and education to explain and enforce Divine Truth. If we are destitute of these, we ought to relinquish the ministry. Will any one say, the situation of *friends* renders it impracticable to undertake a mission?

Without stopping to examine this objection, I have only to say, go learn what this meaneth: "Whosoever he be who forsaketh not all that he hath, he *cannot* be my *disciple*."

Will feeble health be an excuse for neglecting this subject? Some men of the most feeble health have accomplished *most* in the cause of Christ. Knox, the reformer, never had confirmed health, yet he did more for the church than all Scotland besides. Baxter, Brainerd, and Whitefield, were *feeble*, yet in the midst of *weakness*, they were made *strong*. Better, my brethren, wear out and die within three years than live forty in slothfulness.

Now, after an examination of the moral state of the world, and of your obligations to the church and to the heathen, permit the inquiry, what decision have you formed? Millions of heathen, starving for the bread of life, wait for a *reply;* thousands of desponding Christians in our own land, wait for a *reply*. Angels and the spirits of just men made perfect, wait for a *reply*. The Holy *Trinity*, engaged in the work of redemption, waits for a *reply*. Have you decided to labour at *home*. Will you not go forth with the spirit of Him "who went about doing good." Go, build up the waste places of Zion, circulate the Holy Scriptures, communicate religious instruction, and call into action the slumbering *energies* of the *Church*.

Are others hesitating?

Rest assured, beloved brethren, that with a humble reliance upon God, your duty will be made exceedingly plain. Look to *Christ* for direction, and he will never leave you. By secret prayer and devout attention to the subject of missions, you will obtain a conviction of duty which will impart *permanent* happiness.

Others have determined, by Divine assistance, to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ.

Follow in the steps of him, who was the great Apostle of the Gentiles, endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus, go forward with the meekness, fortitude, and boldness of Brainerd, Swartz, Vander Kemp, and let this be your motto, "I can do all things through Christ, who strengtheneth me."

We part *now*, brethren, to suffer a *little while*, and then, God willing to obtain a rich and eternal reward. We launch forth upon the boisterous ocean of life, but we shall safely enter the haven of rest.

Brethren, *pray for us ;* pray for us *individually ;* pray for us in our different *stations*, *connections*, and *employments*. And while *we* remember Zion, we will remember *you*, with whom we have taken sweet counsel, and walked to the house of God in company. When far separated, we will remember that we have the *same Saviour*, are fellow labourers in the *same* cause, and are destined to the *same* eternal rest.

Am I to see my brethren no more! O yes we *meet* again in the *paradise* of God. We will sit down at the marriage supper of the Lamb, and review, with enraptured hearts, the afflictions we have endured, the difficulties encountered, the dangers braved, the victories won.

I need not say *Farewell*, we meet *so soon*, we meet in the streets of the New Jerusalem, purified from sin—clothed with immortal and glorious bodies, and united in bonds of holy and everlasting love.

APPENDIX.

See p. 167.

In the page referred to, the author notices the struggle that we have reason to expect will take place between light and darkness, before the final triumph of Immanuel in our world. I gladly embrace the opportunity of bringing under the view of the reader an eloquent description of this contest from another American writer, the late Mr. Payson. A Memoir of Mr. Payson was some time ago reprinted in this country, and has been read with much interest. The following quotation is from a volume of his Sermons, which has also been recently presented to the British public. It forms the conclusion of a discourse on Isaiah liii. 11.

"Before the promise, that the Lord Jesus shall see of the travel of his soul and be satisfied, can be fulfilled,—before every enemy can be put under his feet,—many exertions must be made, much treasure expended, many battles fought. Satan, the prince and god of this world, will not resign his usurped dominion without a struggle. The more clearly he perceives his time is short, the greater will be his wrath, and the more violent his efforts. During that portion of time which yet remains, the war which he has long waged with the Captain of our Salvation will be carried on with unexampled fury. If you would survey the progress and result of this

war, cast your eyes over the world, which is to be at once the field of battle and the prize of victory. See the earth filled with the strongholds and high places in which the Prince of Darkness has fortified and made himself strong against the Almighty. See all the hosts of hell, and a large proportion of the inhabitants, the power, the wealth, the talents, and the influence of the world, ranged under his infernal standard. See his whole artillery of falsehoods, sophistries, objections, temptations, and persecutions, brought into the field to be employed against the cause of truth. See ten thousand pens, and ten times ten thousand tongues hurling his poisoned darts among its friends. On the other hand, see the comparatively small band of our Saviour's faithful soldiers, drawn up in opposing ranks, and advancing to the assault, clothed in panoply divine, the banner waving over their heads, while in their hands they wield, unsheathed, the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God, the only weapon they are allowed or wish to employ. The charge is sounded,—the assault is made,—the battle is joined,—far and wide its fury rages; over mountains and plains, over islands and continents, extends the long line of conflict. For a time, alternate victory and defeat wait on either side. Now exulting acclamations from the Christian army proclaim the fall of some stronghold of Satan. Anon infuriated shouts from the opposing ranks announce to the world that the cause of Christ is losing ground, or that some Christian standard-bearer is fallen. Meanwhile, far above the noise and tumult of the battle, the Captain of our Salvation sits serene, issuing his commands, and directing the motions of his followers,—sending seasonable aid to such as are ready to faint, and occasionally causing to be seen the lighting-down of his own glorious arm, before which whole squadrons fall, or fly, or yield themselves willing captives. Feeble, and yet more feeble still, gradually becomes the opposition of his foes.

Louder, and yet louder still, rise the triumphant acclamations of his friends, till at length the cry Victory! Victory! resounds from earth to heaven, and Victory! Victory! is echoed back from heaven to earth. The warfare ceases—the prize is won—all enemies are put under the conquering Saviour's feet. The whole earth with joy receives her King, and his kingdom, which consists in righteousness and peace, and holy joy, becomes co-extensive with the world.

Such is the nature, and such will be the termination and result of the contest which is now carrying on in the world. In this contest we are all engaged on the one part or on the other; for in this warfare there are no neutrals; he that is not with Christ is against him. Let us all, then, if we have not already done it, enlist under his banner, and make a common cause with him against a rebellious world; and when he shall appear to judge the universe, he will say to us, 'Come and sit down with me on my throne, even as I overcame, and am seated with my Father on his throne.'"

THE END

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